

Cross Channel Reflections : French Perceptions of Britain from Fashoda to the Boer War.

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract.

This Thesis adopts a variety of different approaches in order to throw light on French perceptions of the British at the turn of the twentieth century. Introduction, chapters one and two set these in the broader context of nineteenth-century attitudes, in particular the genre of invasion literature, and the corpus of work produced by writers from the Ecole Libre, Paris. Not straightforwardly Anglophobic or Anglophile, both drew upon similar British stereotypes, and were shaped by French self-perceptions and internal concerns. The impact of the 1898 Fashoda incident and 1899-1902 Boer War upon French attitudes generally and these strands is considered, before analysis of French diplomacy. This departs from the contending ideas that the French Foreign Minister, Delcassé, determinedly sought an alignment with the British from June 1898 onwards, or that across 1898-1901 he was presumptively hostile to Britain, suggesting instead a self-interested opportunist agenda pursued irrespective of others in policymaking circles. Chapter five takes up John Keiger's suggestion that the Paris press may have been less hostile towards Britain before and during the Fashoda incident than is often depicted, to broaden its evidential base, and push it further, arguing that French anger over Fashoda was in part directed against other, often domestic, targets and its Anglophobia was largely retrospective. Chapter six pursues this story into the early months of the Boer War, pointing to how French press opinions, if emboldened by the tide of international criticism of British policy, again strongly reflected internal preoccupations. The French who volunteered to fight on the Boer side in the war might represent an avowed kernel of Anglophobic opinion. Chapter seven, however, concludes that their motivation had more to do with asserting a certain vision of France, not least at home, something clearly understood by them and the French press of the time.

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LIST OF COMMON ABBREVIATIONS

BDW *British Documents on the Origins of the War.*

DDF *Documents Diplomatiques Français.*

GP *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914.*

MAE Archives of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

NA National Archives, Kew.

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Cross Channel Reflections : French Perceptions of Britain from Fashoda to the Boer War.

Introduction.

How did the French view Britain in the years preceding the Entente Cordiale of 1904?

The end of the 1890s is commonly portrayed as a period of peak Anglophobia within France. Only a few years before 1904, there was no shortage of colourful invective suggesting that reactions evoked by Britain were predominantly negative ones of fear, resentment and envy. This was the era of invasion literature and cartoonist Willette, whose “V’la les English” edition of satirical magazine *Le Rire*, lampooning British cruelty and cant, is often cited.¹ The comments of ardent nationalist Captain Driant on the nature of “ce pays maudit” in 1903 were only the culmination of sentiments expressed throughout his series of Anglophobic war novels of the 1890s:

Après des siècles de libéralisme, l’Angleterre avait remis ses destinées à un ploutocratie avide et sans scrupules. Son aristocratie avait abdiqué sa fierté, sa grandeur, son indépendance entre les mains des maniers d’argent. Sa démocratie froidement indifférente à tout qui ce n’était pas son intérêt et son bien-être... l’Angleterre du XXe siècle était devenue la Carthage moderne. Elle en avait la cruauté, les convoitises, la foi punique, le mépris des traités... Elle allait finir comme Carthage.²

There was, however, another side to the story. Educator, Liberal economist and political commentator Emile Boutmy had been moved in 1891 to comment that:

During the last 150 years a prejudice in favour of the English has grown up among the French, and is increased, I believe, by a humble minded retrospect of their own character and history. Whenever a Frenchman discusses the political system of England the words which occur to him are respect for traditions, moderation, wisdom, regular exercise of political power and legal resistance.³

The striking contrasts between such viewpoints on much the same subject lay in the differing purposes of the authors, something as much relevant to how they felt about

¹ E.g. Jacques Lethève, *La Caricature et la Presse Sous la IIIe République* (Paris, Armand Collins: 1961), 118-119 and Robert & Isabelle Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (London, William Heinemann: 2006), 447-448, and see pictures 1.1-1.5.

² Capitaine Danrit, *La Guerre Fatale France Angleterre* (Paris, Ernest Flammarion: 1903), Vol 3, 29, 73 & 74.

³ Émile Boutmy, *Studies in Constitutional Law, France, England, United States* (London, Macmillan & Co: 1891. Translated E.M.Dicey), 37.

their own country as any abroad. More generally, François Crouzet summed up the situation of the student of any country foreign to himself as follows:

L'observateur voit, pense, et juge en fonction des préoccupations de politique intérieure de son propre pays: Il cherche à l'étranger des réponses aux questions qui se posent chez lui, ainsi que des armes utilisables pour les polémiques internes.⁴

Any study of French perceptions of Britain must therefore avoid the temptation to offer a smoothly homogenous account. Contradictory and complex, French views of the British reflected domestic agendas and conflicts as much as they did any real knowledge of Britain itself. French perceptions can be read through a wide range of sources- the works of academics and publicists, but also novels and popular literary works, paintings and postcards. The press, too, is of importance, ranging from mass circulation dailies to more elite publications.

It would probably be true, however, that the French were in this period less obsessed with the British than they were with the Germans, who had so humiliatingly defeated them in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71. The case of Germany has therefore attracted much historical attention. Claude Digeon traced the challenges presented to French intellectuals after 1871 in simultaneously being confronted by the unpalatable nature of German success, and coming to terms with learning lessons for themselves from that success.⁵ Self-consciously aiming to avoid the same ground, Allan Mitchell's trilogy on the early Third Republic began in close analysis of the control exercised by Bismarck over French governments in the 1870s. Later volumes went on to address the more voluntary, and less direct, impact of Germany as a model to follow or avoid when reshaping the French church, army and education up to 1898, and its influence on

⁴ François Crouzet, "Problèmes de la communication franco-britannique" in *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (July-September 1975), 113.

⁵ Claude Digeon, *La Crise Allemande de la Pensée Française* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France: 1959).

French social reform.⁶ All of these were most concerned with how (perceived) German ideas affected the methods of elite groups within France. Mitchell's final volume characterised French reactions to Germany as "a mixture of apprehension and admiration".⁷ At a popular level, the situation has been summed up in the terms "Avec l'Allemagne, tout est simple: C'est un pays ennemi. La France n'oublie pas la défaite de 1870".⁸ No politician would have dared publicly to resign future prospects of recovering the provinces lost to the German Empire. No reliable travel figures are available for the period, but Theodore Zeldin suggested, on the basis of the notably small numbers of visitors exchanged in the 1920s between France and Germany, that the number of visits from one country to the other must have been constrained for decades beforehand.⁹

Anglo-French relations did not carry the same emotional charge. The rise of Germany was facilitated by a French defeat pinpointed in a particular moment within living memory, whereas the genesis of British ascendancy, well established by the 1860s, had been more gradual, and was not so closely linked to such a complete and sudden humiliation of France. As J.E.C. Bodley reflected in 1898, "three generations have gone by without the armies of England and France meeting in battle array...there is no man living who has fired a shot in warfare between the French and English nations".¹⁰ Although some French took Britain, like Germany, to be a success potentially offering directions for French development, less odium usually attached to the embracing of British ways, fraternisation between British and French elites making it easier to be open

⁶ Allan Mitchell, *German Influence in France after 1870* (London, University of North Carolina Press: 1979), *Victors and Vanquished; German Influence on Army and Church in France after 1870* (London, University of North Carolina Press: 1984), *The Divided Path German Influence on Social Reform in France after 1870* (London, University of North Carolina Press: 1991).

⁷ Mitchell, *Divided Path* (1991), 67, relative to the German model for social reform, 278-279 adding that 1903 proposals for social reform potentially attributable to German influence would be much more palatable when labelled Belgian in origin.

⁸ Lethève, *Caricature* (1961), 113.

⁹ Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945, Intellect Taste and Anxiety*, Vol 2, (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1977), 86-87 and 117.

¹⁰ J.E.C. Bodley, *France* (London, 1898), 59-61, quoted by Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 307.

about fully expressing ideas imported from across the channel. Unlike in the case of Germany, it was possible in late nineteenth-century France to entertain publicly any of a wide range of different shades of opinion on Britain. Study of the British in the French imagination consequently entails an encounter with a range of attitudes the layers and breadth of which were not directly distorted by the trauma of 1870-71, and which perhaps more faithfully illuminate the differences between those within France whose perceptions were recorded.

Notable Historiography.

Existing studies of French perceptions of Britain tend to fall into two categories. The more generalised cover longer periods, which inhibits any overall argument except on broad, qualified lines. They usually include British views on France as well as the French on Britain.¹¹ P.M.H. Bell's self-confessedly "synthetic" work on Anglo-French relations as a whole, if seeking to integrate a "cultural" approach, for the period up to 1914 emphasises high politics. Only a few pages are devoted to the impressions mainly of those exiled to Britain or sufficiently wealthy to visit, or be educated at, Oxford.¹² Bell covers a more truly "popular" conception of Britain and the British only for the period after 1914 when more prolific diaries, memoirs and letters by or featuring Britons in France made such impressions easier to evidence and sustain. More recently, Tombs has provided a long-term model against which the events and attitudes of a particular short period can be tested or compared. The Zola-Viztelly trial and French views on Wilde lead Tombs to conclude that overdrawn moral differences formed part of French discourse on Britain. This point can be re-evaluated and developed in the light of French

¹¹ Crouzet, "communication franco-britannique", *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 105-134, Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), the themed essays of François Crouzet & Douglas Johnson, *Britain and France: Ten Centuries* (Folkestone, Dawson & Son Ltd: 1980), Philip Michael Hett Bell, *France and Britain 1900-1940, Entente and Estrangement* (Harlow, Longman Group: 1994), Roberto Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France 1750-1914* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 2002) and Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), took between 40 to 1000 years each.

¹² Bell, *France and Britain* (1994), viii & 15-19.

perceptions of events in the Sudan and South Africa.¹³ However, Tombs still identifies contradictory but simultaneous trends- The 1880s & 1890s having seen the blossoming of British-inspired sport within France at “a time of relative Anglophobia”, he concluded on this period by detecting a lack of “bitterness and real hatred”, at least in personal relations.¹⁴ Fabrice Serodes, covering 42 years, explores the degree to which Anglophobia impacted on the decisions of French leaders. Long-term though such feelings may be, he avers them to have been of little intrinsic importance, becoming significant only in so far as they affected the “hommes politiques” who took the decisions.¹⁵

The second category of studies tends to concentrate study on specific aspects of Anglo-French relations, most often focusing on intergovernmental relations without attaching much weight to popular views.¹⁶ Works by M.B. Hayne, John Keiger, Paul Lauren, and Christopher Andrew variously analyse French policymaking and foreign policy, in Quai d’Orsay centred, often comparative, narratives where the main importance of French popular perceptions of other nations lies in their influence (or lack of it) on governmental policies.¹⁷ Popular sentiment was consequently a minor factor. Policies actually executed owed far more to the stances of a very small number of men, in the Quai d’Orsay or abroad in the Diplomatic Corps. Consequently, those stances, in any case easier to trace as those of literate individuals who committed their evolving

¹³ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 400.

¹⁴ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 410 & 428.

¹⁵ Fabrice Serodes, *Anglophobie et Politique de Fachoda à Mers el-Kébir* (Paris, Harmattan: 2010), 7.

¹⁶ One exception was Marius-François Guyard, *La Grande-Bretagne dans le Romain Français 1914-1940* (Paris, Librairie Marcel Didier: 1954) examining Britain as constructed by French writers.

¹⁷ Christopher Andrew, *Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale* (London, Macmillan: 1968), Paul Gordon Lauren, *Diplomats and Bureaucrats* (Stanford, Hoover Institution Press: 1976), M.B. Hayne, *The French Foreign Office and the Origins of the First World War 1898-1914* (Oxford, Clarendon Press: 1993), John F.V. Keiger, *France and the Origins of the First World War* (London, Macmillan Press: 1983), commissioned as part of a wide ranging “Making of the Twentieth Century” series with corresponding volumes on Germany, Italy, Russia and Britain, and John F.V. Keiger, *France and the World Since 1870* (London, Arnold: 2001), which was self consciously part of a series, paralleled by Michael A. Barnhart, *Japan and the World Since 1868* (London, Arnold: 1995) and John W. Young, *Britain and the World in the Twentieth Century* (London, Arnold: 1997).

thoughts to paper, assumed a far greater importance than the wider attitudes of a largely ignored French public whose feelings have sometimes been characterised as ones of apathy where foreign relations were concerned.¹⁸ Serodes addressed this in part by discussing at length the opinions not just of leading politicians and diplomats but also men of the navy, army and the press - if still primarily interested in the reach and influence of Anglophobia, as opposed to other sentiments involving Britain.

Some older works have addressed public opinion but they too tend ultimately to focus on high politics and diplomacy.¹⁹ E.M. Carroll's 1931 survey represents a genuine attempt to move "Public Opinion" to centre stage, in the general context of all French foreign affairs across a 44 year period.²⁰ However, it was traditional barometers of electoral results, known political affiliations, or the extent to which this or that public demonstration attracted bodies that Carroll depended upon to complement his close reading of Paris newspapers.²¹ Its age also handicaps it.²² Arguably, Carroll's is a "problem based" study as much as a work of specifically French history, a point reinforced by its only occasional references to French attitudes of a longer and more underlying nature.²³ Finally, as Carroll himself was aware, his sources could give only

¹⁸ Christopher Andrew & A.S. Kanya-Forstner, "The French 'Colonial Party': Its Composition, Aims, and Influence, 1885-1914" in *The Historical Journal*, Vol 14.1 (March 1971), 126, asserted in explaining the influence of the pre 1914 Parti Colonial that "French people and their parliaments were almost totally apathetic to foreign and colonial affairs".

¹⁹ For example, Bertha Leaman, "The Influence of Domestic Policy on Foreign Affairs in France, 1898-1905" in *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol 14.4 (December 1942), 449-479, and Brynjolf Hovde, "French Socialism and the Triple Entente, 1893-1914" in *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol 34.4 (August 1926), 458-478.

²⁰ Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 259, deems Carroll "still useful".

²¹ For example, E.Malcolm Carroll, *French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs, 1870-1914* (London, Frank Cass & Company: 1931), 192-193 interpreting electoral decline of the nationalists in Paris and parliament, 1900-6 as evidence of public opinion successfully resisting extremism, and 113 on membership of Ligue de Patriotes in the 1880s.

²² Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), 7-Prefectoral reports of regional opinion were in 1930 not publicly available for the period after 1870- and the scale and nature of bribery relative to the Paris press remained a subject of uncertain speculation for Carroll-contrast Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 45, and Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 37-8, describing the corruption, with particular reference to widespread Russian bribery of French newspapers at the time of the 1912-3 Balkan wars.

²³ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), rare references to long term artefacts including 4-5 Carroll's own discussion of the issues involved in his work and 195, referring to schooling/school books.

an approximate idea of opinion, conceding, relative to the Tsar's 1898 call for a disarmament conference, that:

The reaction of the most important papers showed that the press could not be expected to furnish the necessary leadership for the mostly inarticulate elements which insensibly were developing a saner point of view in regard to France's relations with Germany.²⁴

Form and Questions.

Existing historiography provides a useful starting point for this study, which proposes to focus on a short period running from 1898-1903. This juncture is of interest for several reasons. Firstly, the Fashoda crisis dominated foreign affairs in autumn 1898 and the Boer War put the British towards the forefront of everyone's attention. These events generated visceral Anglophobic animosity, the extent and nature of which merits re-examination, in light of the rapprochement which took place around 1903. Conversely, going beyond Serodes' preoccupation with Anglophobia, one must ask how other constituencies responded. What of the reactions to Fashoda and the Boer War of commentators who had been broadly Anglophile? More generally, the events of these years afford the chance to analyse the ways in which long standing attitudes, exemplified by the legacy of Hippolyte Taine, impacted upon particular moments of crisis and were possibly changed by them.

Secondly, the period 1898-1902 with hindsight constituted a pivotal juncture in Anglo-French relations. Prior to the Fashoda incident, few even inside the Quai would have forecast the advent, less than six years later, of an Entente Cordiale. The crisis and the Boer War saw a radical shift in French perceptions of both what was desirable and what was achievable, catalysed by British feelings of insecurity engendered by the war, and the growing military strength of a German leadership unwilling to commit itself to closer diplomatic links with France or Britain. Played out against a backdrop of factional

²⁴ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), 184.

politics and longer lasting conceptions of Britain, a distinct shift towards a pro-British position became perceptible in France's upper echelons.

Of especial pertinence to the period of 1898-1902, a third issue was that of how far "official" French thought diverged from public opinion. Unrest among radical nationalists, sharpened by the Dreyfus affair and visible at the time of the Fashoda incident, was exacerbated during the Boer War. In contrast, the French government, despite some pro-Boer noises for public consumption, remained studiously neutral and determined to avoid antagonising Britain. That said, buttressed by a tide of popular feeling manifested in postcards and by the departure of French volunteers to fight for the Boers, it was the press of both left and right that (albeit with differing motivations) called for official action that was never forthcoming. Study of the "official" press together with Quai archives suggests how and to what extent the French government pursued neutrality in the conflict. It also provides a revealing picture of its relationship with popular currents that ran in contradiction of official policy. Carroll's was the last full length systematic study of the Third Republic's press, public opinion and foreign policy, 80 years ago, leaving that field open for re evaluation in light of more recent historical research.²⁵

The Nineteenth-Century Background.

The kinds of attitudes which emerge in the short period covered by this thesis need to be viewed in the light of a number of traditions of viewing Britain that had been apparent in the nineteenth century. Some characterisations of Britain were already well established by 1800. Notions of British arrogance, or the "Nation of shopkeepers" attributed to Napoleon, were adumbrated by the 1550s French traveller who found the British given

²⁵ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), was followed by articles of more limited length and scope such as Leaman, "Influence of Domestic Policy", *Journal of Modern History*, Vol 14.4 (1942), 449-479, and Rachel Arié, "L'Opinion Publique en France et l'Affaire de Fachoda" in *Revue d'Histoire des Colonies*, Tome XLI (1954), 329-367, describing newspaper reports across the three years of 1896-1898.

“only to vanity and ambition and merchandise”.²⁶ The idea of “Perfide Albion” was likewise centuries old.²⁷ Romani agrees that depictions of the British across 1750-1914 were marked more by continuity than change.²⁸ Having emphasised the essential continuity before and after 1815 in British perceptions of the French and vice versa, Tombs argues that by the 1850s, despite changes in British attitudes, the French still had much the same “concrete set of ‘English’ stereotypes” as in 1814.²⁹ At a time when opportunities for travel were, for most people, severely limited, material published by those who had encountered or studied the British remained highly influential. The same ideas might be re-worked through successive authors, even ones functioning from opposing political perspectives. Jules Michelet (1798-1874)’s notions of Britain as a place where an extreme wealth co-existed with extreme poverty were successively taken up by early socialist and feminist Flora Tristan (1803-1844), exiled 1848 revolutionary Alexandre Ledru-Rollin (1807-1874), exiled former Communard Jules Vallès (1832-1885), but also by Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893).³⁰ The lessons drawn from these observations were very different. Ledru-Rollin took this stark economic inequality as decisive proof condemning government by aristocracy and economic individualism, whereas Taine saw in English noblemen natural leaders of the type that France had - unfortunately- lost with its ancien regime, and the inequality as an engine of change.³¹ As Tombs points out, Anglophilia and Anglophobia, more often than not agreeing on the existence of a particular British phenomenon, were two sides of the same coin, differing

²⁶ Etienne Perlin, quoted by Christopher Morris, *The Tudors* (London, Fontana Collins: 1973), 104.

²⁷ On the origins of “Perfide Albion”, see Bell, *France and Britain* (1994), 10, and its historical longevity Martyn Cornick, “The Myth of Perfidious Albion and French National Identity”, in David Dutton (ed), *Statecraft and Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Liverpool University Press: 1995), 8-13, and Stephen Bunard, “Français-Anglais: 100 ans de mésentente cordiale”, interview with Fabrice Serodes, 1 April 2004, www.europeplusnet.info/article92.

²⁸ Romani, *National Character* (2002), 2.

²⁹ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 311 & 352.

³⁰ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 331-332, 352, 383 & 388.

³¹ Crouzet, “communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 127, citing A.A.Ledru-Rollin, *De la décadence de l'Angleterre* (Paris: 1850), Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 104 and Peter Thorold, *The British in France. Visitors and Residents Since the Revolution* (London, Continuum: 2000), 188.

from each other only in how (for example) British phlegm might be evaluated.³² Despite Taine's lack of an explicitly Anglophobe agenda, what he wrote was not inconsistent with negative judgements, or could be re-worked so as to tease out or emphasise the negative connotations.

The host of characteristics stereotypically associated with Britain (the fog, the rain), the British (the big teeth, feet and appetites) and their behaviour (the physical exercise, predilection for pragmatism and facts as opposed to theory) all passed through the hands of Taine, in the extensive *Histoire De La Littérature Anglaise* (1863) and *Notes sur l'Angleterre* (1871).³³ Although Taine spent little time in Britain, preferring to go there to confirm theories already formed from his book-reading rather than to conduct open-ended research, his works went through many editions and remained highly influential.³⁴ Like Michelet, who had opined "as is the nest, so is the bird", Taine interlinked ideas of environment and climate with his impressions of national character, so creating a deterministic system that proved very attractive and convincing to his French readers.³⁵ The "perpetual English miracle" that emerged from Taine's pages owed much to a gentry and aristocracy marked by "prestige, authority, devotion to the public good, patronage of the dominated classes and intellectual curiosity", its younger scions set loose by rules of primogeniture from "lazy mediocrity" to make their own way in the world.³⁶ Zeldin suggested, for Guizot and others from the 1820s to the 1870s, that sympathy for Britain often "involved admiration for the aristocracy", at most making

³² Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 439-440.

³³ Crouzet, "communication franco-britannique", *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 115 & Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 388 & 445. On Taine generally, see Herbert Tint, *The Decline of French Patriotism 1870-1940* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicholson: 1964), 70-80 & Patrick Hutton, *Historical Dictionary of the Third French Republic* (London, Aldwych Press: 1986), 994.

³⁴ Crouzet, "communication franco-britannique", *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 112 & Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 104.

³⁵ Michelet quoted by Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 441; Christophe Charle, "French intellectuals and the impossible English model (1870-1914)", in Christophe Charle, Julien Vincent & Jay Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes, Comparisons and Transfers Between English and French Intellectuals since the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2007), 240.

³⁶ Charle, "French intellectuals" Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 241.

England “a model only for a small class of snobs”.³⁷ Whilst Taine’s work had something in common with Guizot and much to imply by way of comment on French society by comparison, Taine’s refusal to admit that Britain offered a model capable of any effective emulation gave his work an air of pessimism, describing as it therefore did a blind alley.³⁸

These figures and others fed into a persisting broad Anglophilia which tended to be centrist/liberal, whilst broad currents of Anglophobic thought were at their strongest on the extreme left and extreme right, but certain undulations in the prevalence of Anglophile/phobe attitudes appeared across time. After the Catholic excesses of Charles X had provoked overthrow of the Bourbon restoration in 1830, the liberal July Monarchy marked a shift towards an official Anglophilia. Anglophobe commentators may have been “a noisy minority”, yet the animosity in France towards the Guizot and the King for their Anglophilia still became widespread as the monarchy’s fortunes waned in the 1840s.³⁹ Anglo-French relations during the Second Empire ricocheted between mutual invasion scares, and the two nations allying in the Crimean War in the 1850s, then culminated in British non-involvement in the expedition of Napoleon III to Mexico, and abandonment of the Emperor to his fate in 1870.⁴⁰ French indifference during the Third Republic’s early years was markedly altered in 1882 by the British occupation of Egypt, creating an issue that poisoned Anglo-French relations for the next 16 years.⁴¹ It was in the 1880s and 1890s that nationalism and Anglophobia lost ground on the left, to become the preserve of the radical right. With a few notable exceptions such as Paul Déroulède, French nationalists of the right were commonly Anglophobe, as well as Germanophobe and anti-Semitic.

³⁷ Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 102.

³⁸ Charle, “French intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 241-242.

³⁹ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 335 & 343.

⁴⁰ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 354-358, 360 & 375-376.

⁴¹ Lethève, *Caricature* (1961), 117 & Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 83.

Across the political spectrum, that a “sense of apartness shaped British identity” was not lost on the French, for whom the British remained “self-sufficient, suspicious of continental ideas... solitary and unsociable”.⁴² Close geographical neighbour as it may have been, Britain retained its strange and foreign feel. First thrust into exile in 1898, a bewildered Émile Zola wrote “I am landing here, as if cut off from men, in a distant world”.⁴³ In different circumstances, this otherness might carry quite different connotations, but remained strong. Paradoxically, given that homosexual practices remained illegal in Britain, for André Gide crossing the channel with his male lover “signified a rupture with convention, a crossing of repressive boundaries, in short a sexual liberation”.⁴⁴ Marcel Proust, it has been argued, in equating homosexuality with the foreign and the exotic, “uses English references to bring out the otherness of homosexuality”, and “associating it with things English, even making English a kind of coded language as spoken by his homosexual characters”.⁴⁵

This sense of strangeness persisted, as did a severely limited geographical scope to French visits to Britain. Zola, despite the need to conceal himself, almost entirely stayed in London.⁴⁶ The popularity of Scotland, with that of Walter Scott, having faded by the mid nineteenth century, visitors’ impressions were disproportionately dominated by the “circuit classique Douvres-Londres-Oxford”, with a few excursions to Windsor and

⁴² Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 350, and Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 107, CF Faucher, 1845, “England is certainly a world apart”, quoted by Martyn Cornick, “Distorting Mirrors: Problems of French-British Perception in the *Fin-de-siècle*” in Martyn Cornick, and Ceri Crossley, (eds), *Problems of French History: Essays in Honour of Douglas Johnson* (Basingstoke, Palgrave: 2000), 130.

⁴³ Joanna Richardson, *Zola* (New York, St Martin’s Press: 1978), 191.

⁴⁴ Emily Eells, *Proust’s Cup of Tea, Homoeroticism and Victorian Culture* (Aldershot, Aldgate Publishing: 2002), 4.

⁴⁵ Eells, *Proust’s Cup* (2002), 2 & 3.

⁴⁶ Rather than face imprisonment during the Dreyfus affair, Zola arrived in Britain on 18 July 1898, staying in rented houses at Penn and Addlestone, before moving to hotels in Kensington and Norwood. Graham King, *The Garden of Zola* (London, Barrie & Jenkins Ltd: 1978), 355-356. F.W.J.Hemmings, *The Life and Times of Emile Zola* (London, Paul Elek Books: 1977), 170-174, Richardson, *Zola* (1978), 191-199, and Philip Walker, *Zola* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul: 1985), 232-233.

Eton.⁴⁷ There were exceptions to this rule. Edmond Demolins visited Scotland every August from 1892-6 because he was invited to attend and speak at the Congress for the British Advancement of Science in Edinburgh.⁴⁸ Scott still possessed a residual allure evidenced by the trip, in between long stays in London and Oxford, made to Scotland by Jacques Bardoux, but he was deeply depressed by this “affreux pays” and wished never to return.⁴⁹ Pierre De Coulevain’s later venture from London to Bath was covered in the tellingly entitled *L’île inconnue*, (1906).⁵⁰

Polarising views on the nation on both sides of the political spectrum by 1898 was Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jew in the French army accused in October 1894 of spying for the Germans on the basis of a handwritten “bordereau”, containing information on French artillery and found by a French spy in the German embassy. Dreyfus was convicted and sentenced by Court Martial two months later to degradation and imprisonment on remote Devil’s Island, his case then subject to continued investigation by Colonel Georges Picquart, who in 1896 established the real author of the bordereau as Dreyfus’ fellow officer, Major Esterhazy. Dreyfus’ brother Mathieu, ascertaining the same culprit’s guilt, mustered support which resulted in a Court Martial for Esterhazy, whose acquittal in January 1898 turned the “case” into the “Affair” when Zola provoked a libel trial by publishing in *L’Aurore* an open letter to President Faure alleging dishonesty and incompetence amongst those involved in the initial investigation and Court Martial. Deeply divisive controversy ensued as it emerged that much of the evidence against Dreyfus had been forged by Colonel Henry, who committed suicide

⁴⁷ Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 103 on Scott; Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 47, Crouzet, “communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 106, and Bell, *France and Britain* (1994), 16-17.

⁴⁸ Edmond Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority To What is it Due?* (London, Leadenhall Press: 1898. Translated by Louis Lavigne from *A Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons*, tenth French edition), 140-1.

⁴⁹ Félix Bonafé, *Jacques Bardoux, une vocation politique* (Tulle, Maugein et Cie: 1977), 45.

⁵⁰ Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 7.

whilst in custody on 31 August 1898, the decision to revise the case was taken by government, Dreyfus was brought back from Devil's Island to face a fresh trial at Rennes in August 1899, was re-convicted (with extenuating circumstances) by 5 votes to 2 in September, then set free, to carry on pleading his innocence. Dwarfing the man and the intrinsic value of the intelligence were the issues that hung upon the affair - the deliberate falsification of evidence, the extreme reluctance on the part of the army to reverse its first verdict, anti-Semitism, and what kind of nation France was becoming. Right-wing nationalists sided with the army, right or wrong, as a personification of the nation and its honour, taking precedence over the fate of one individual. The hate of Jews apparent in many cases extended to Britain as well as Germany, both being accused of funding the Dreyfusards to undermine the French army and nation. The left, demonstrating how far they had travelled since the days of republican/revolutionary nationalism, stressed the rights of the accused, happily finding fault with the practices of an army whose officer corps remained disproportionately Catholic, conservative, and wealthy. After January 1898, the British, practically everyone from the Queen downwards, sympathised openly with Dreyfus, Francophobes taking the affair as evidence of France's vainglorious, militaristic atmosphere and inadequate commitment to proper justice.⁵¹

It was against this fractious, if not febrile, background that the Fashoda Incident erupted, in September 1898. Forming a context for the reactions expressed from 1898-1902, the nineteenth century had provided an evolving and fulsome series of perceptions. Two sets of cultural products embodying such perceptions are analysed in chapters 1-2. So-called invasion literature, which fantasised future wars between Britain and continental powers, took a presumptively Anglophobe line. In contrast, the large body of work produced by

⁵¹ Martin Cornick, "La Réception de l'Affaire en Grande-Bretagne" in Michel Drouin (ed), *L'Affaire Dreyfus de A à Z* (Paris Flammarion: 1994), 575-580, and Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 421-422.

the commentators of l'Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques was reputedly Anglophile, if with important qualifications that are not always fully appreciated. Chapter 3 details the Fashoda Incident and Boer War, together with responses to them from the authors discussed in chapters 1-2. Shifts of attitude within French policymaking circles are detailed in chapter 4. The journey of the Quai d'Orsay, the Parti Colonial and foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé to the Entente via realisation that France might for practical purposes be better off working with British goodwill, rather than continuing to incur the animosity of both Germany and Britain, remains controversial in historical debate. Here, an attempt is made to elucidate and explain the thinking of Delcassé throughout his early years at the Quai. These chapters in turn contextualise the remainder of the thesis. Chapter 5 considers the response of the Paris press to Fashoda, seeking to push further arguments already made by Keiger that, at least during the crisis itself, many newspapers were not as Anglophobic as has often been claimed. By way of comparison, chapter 6 investigates the Paris Press's reactions to the early Boer War, to nuance what, on the face of it, seem almost uniformly negative depictions of Britain. An important aspect of French attitudes, that they were shaped at least as much by internal French preoccupations as any objective perception of Britain, comes to the fore here, and re-emerges in chapter 7, which, centres on the French volunteers who fought in the war on the Boer side, evaluating their views, and those of French officialdom and the press on the volunteers.

Defining Terms

Anglais, Angleterre, Anglophile and Anglophobe are terms which crop up repeatedly in primary and secondary sources. If, as Serodes asserts, Anglophobia of the sort aired by Driant in 1903 sought to legitimate itself as “une révolte légitime contre un ordre du monde trop déséquilibré”, then the anti-Americanism which emerged in the 30 years

after 1919 can be interpreted as its spiritual successor.⁵² This renders helpful Toinet's grappling with the distinctions between engaging in reasoned criticism of some specific American thing, and a "systematic opposition-a sort of allergic reaction-to America as a whole".⁵³ Such a pathological response, she averred, was rare in France, but "Anti-Americanism" was still a live concept by virtue of extraordinary American sensitivity to any "criticism *per se*", Serodes stressing the systemic aspect of Anglophobia, to which he, too, added British sensitivity to criticism.⁵⁴ However, the definition and scope of Anglophobia or Anti-Americanism varied from one political perspective to the next. Anglophobia too might cover a wide spectrum of opinions, but for present purposes might be defined as an overarching tendency to place an uncomplimentary or negative interpretation upon successive things, persons or events solely or mainly because they are British rather than by virtue of their intrinsic merits. In the same way, Anglophilia might be similarly overarching, but tending to welcome or praise anything British. Underlining the porousness of such concepts, though, neither current, if to have much meaning at all, can reasonably be inferred from only one instance, or be deemed incompatible with reasoned observations about particular things, persons or events. Such criticism might meld inextricably with Anglophobic currents, even in the case of Willette.⁵⁵

⁵² Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 83, and Fabrice Serodes, "L'Anglophobie est morte! Vive l'antiaméricanisme? Is antiamericanism the son of Anglophobia? Continuités et ruptures d'un anti-hégémonisme" in *Cosmopolitique*, 5 Mai 2005 on www.sens-publique.org/spip.php?article174.

⁵³ Marie-France Toinet, "The Lawyer's Verdict" in Denis Lacorne, Jacques Rupnik & Marie-France Toinet, *The Rise and Fall of Anti Americanism A Century of French Perception* (London, Macmillan: 1990), 219.

⁵⁴ Toinet, "Lawyer's Verdict", Lacorne, Rupnik & Toinet, *Anti Americanism* (1990), 220 and Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 19-25.

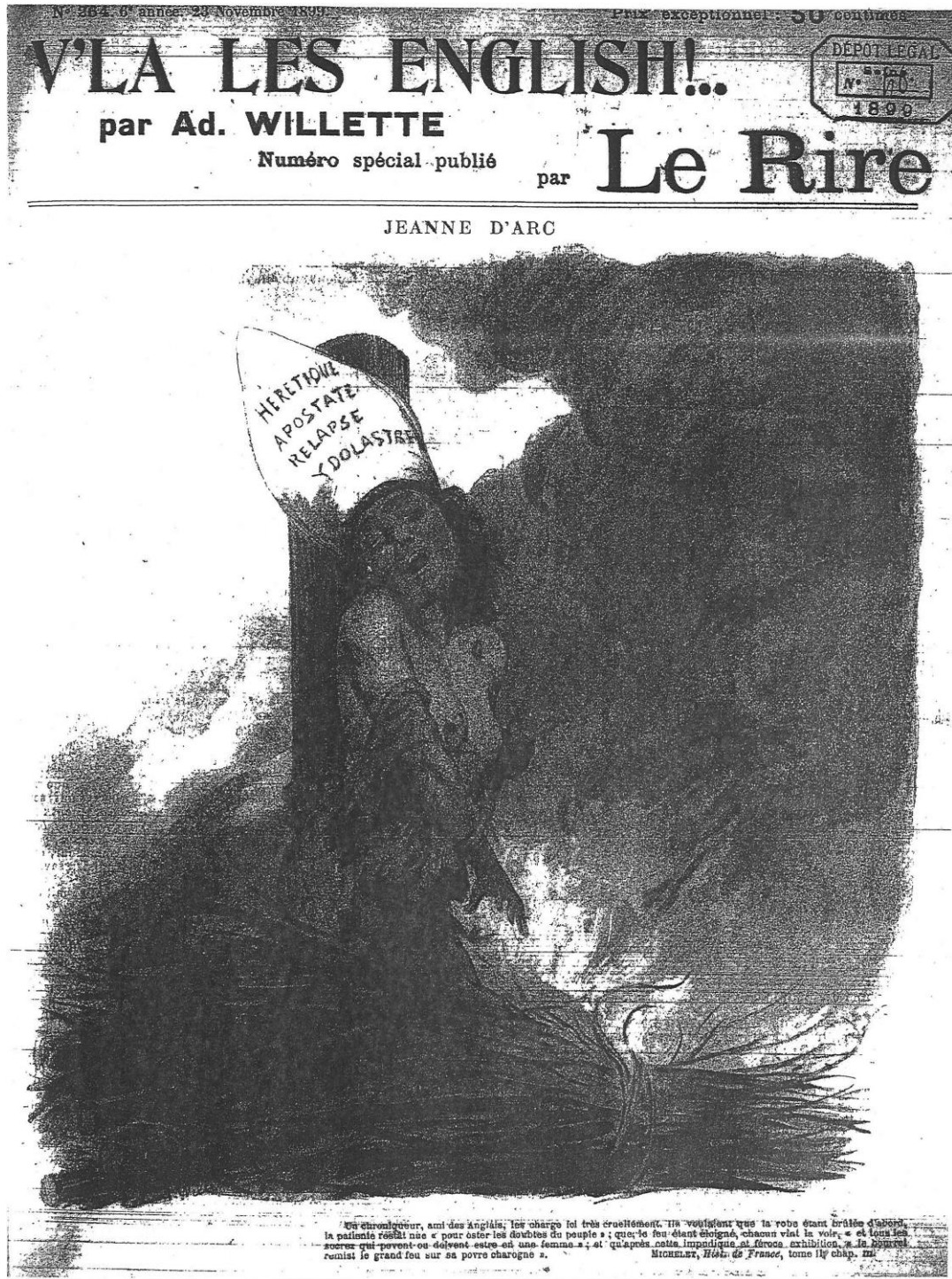
⁵⁵ CF. Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 32 "Toute critique contre le Royaume-Uni ne peut... être qualifiée d' 'anglophobe' sinon le concept ne voudrais plus rien dire". See Picture 1.4, which, though emotively Anglophobic in execution, clearly had at its core the not unreasonable observation that British rule over Ireland had been in complete disregard of the wishes of the Irish themselves-who were thus oppressed and martyred.

The terms Anglophilia and Anglophobia, whether employed now or in 1900, retain at their semantic (and, arguably, conceptual) heart the English rather than the Scottish, Welsh or Irish, echoing French use of “Anglais” or “Angleterre” as terms actually meaning “British” and “Britain”. Regional differences within Britain were, it would seem, usually less important to French commentators, journalists, politicians and diplomats than the distinction between Britain and France.⁵⁶ Whilst we should remain mindful of these anomalies, for the sake of avoiding repeated qualifications “Anglais” and “Angleterre” (except where the context of the source demonstrates otherwise) have for practical purposes been taken as synonymous with “British” and “Britain”.

⁵⁶ Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 14.

Illustrations (1).

Introduction : Pictures 1.1 - 1.4. Cartoons from “V’la Les English”, *Le Rire*, 23 November 1899. One of several prolific cartoonists active in 1898-1902, Adolphe Willette (1857-1926), sometime illustrator for *La Libre Parole Illustré*, was not only an avowed anti Semite but also produced this Anglophobic special edition for *Le Rire*. Opening with a semi naked Joan of Arc meeting her end amongst a stack of burning faggots, Willette amongst other things castigated British brutality in India, epitomised by the game hunter using a live native child as bait to attract crocodiles, British drunkenness and the hypocrisy of claims to treat women respectfully in the depiction of the poor young girl cowering on the ground outside a bar, and British subjugation of Ireland, symbolically portrayed as a woman being crucified.



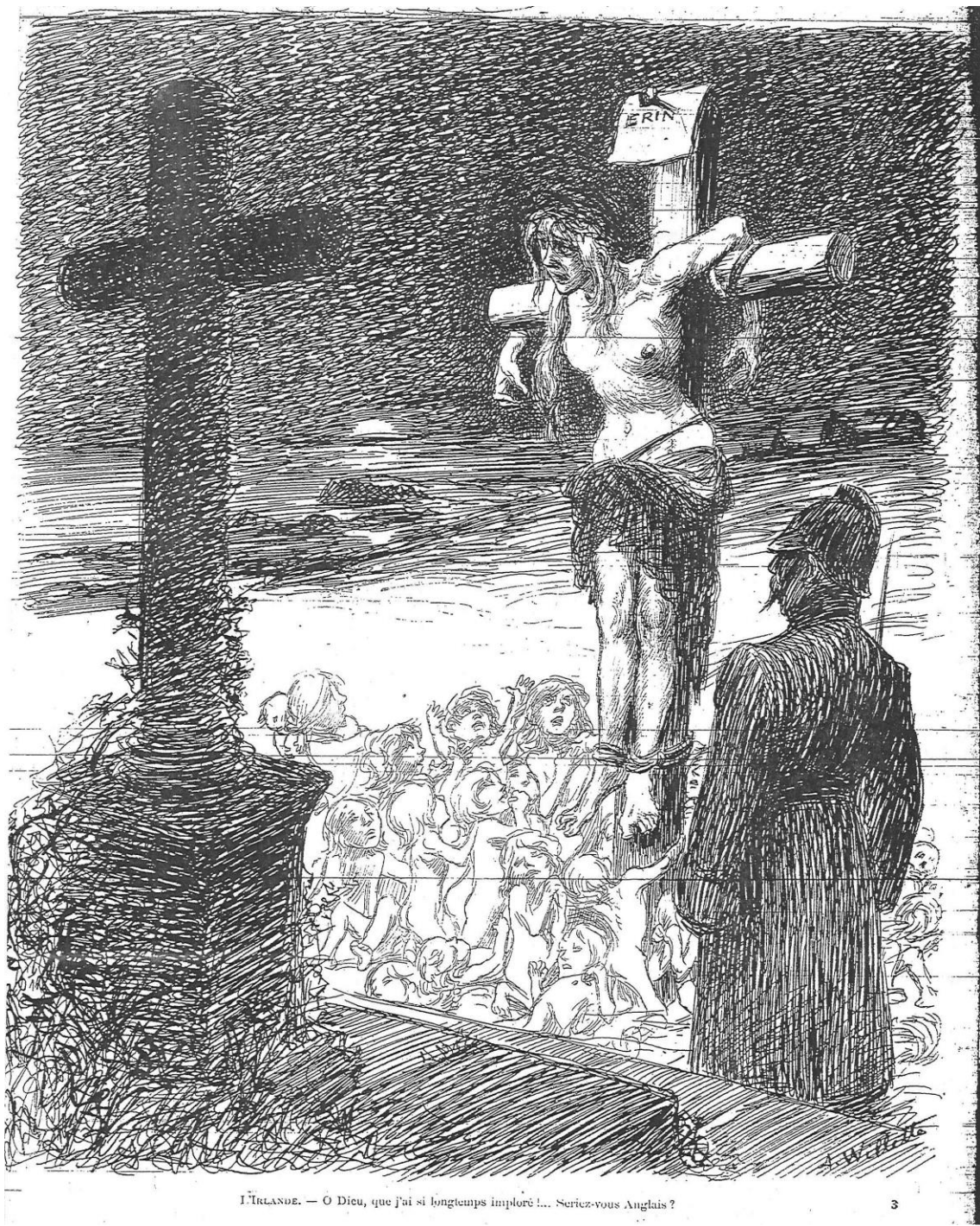
LES ANGLAIS AUX INDES



LE CHASSEUR SE SERVANT D'APPAT HUMAIN POUR CHASSER LE CROCODILE

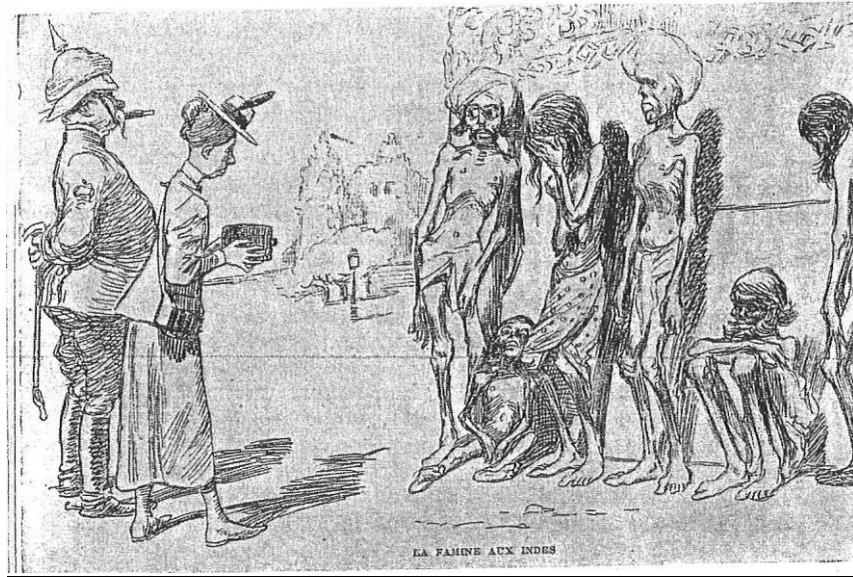


EN ANGLETERRE, LA FEMME EST RESPECTÉE

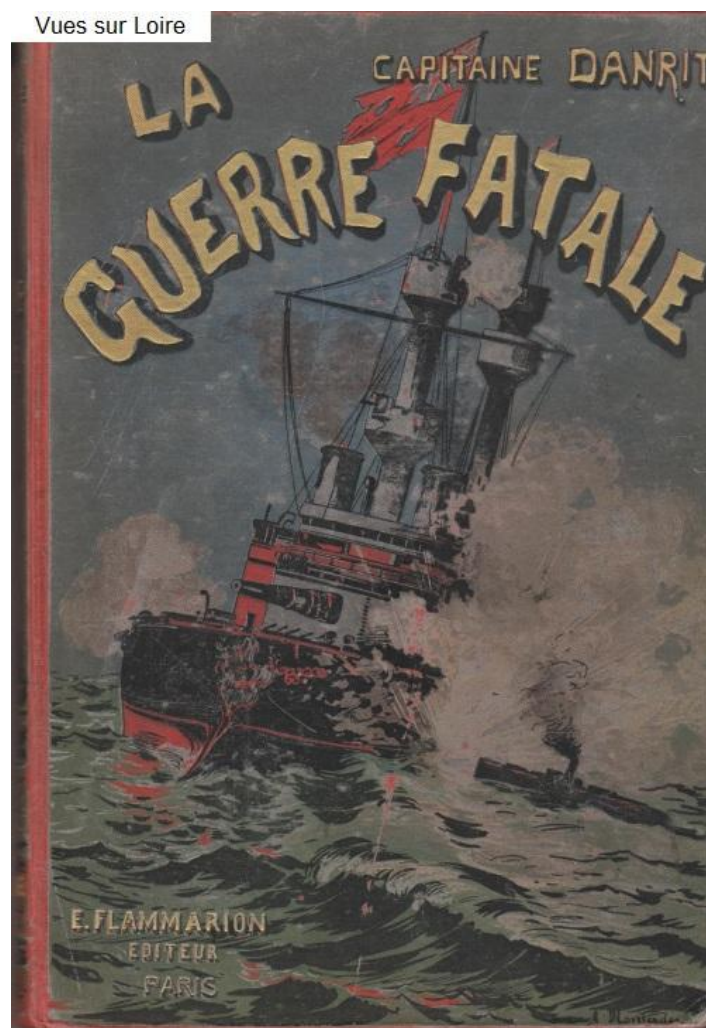


Picture 1.5 Cartoon from “V’la Les English”, *Le Rire*, 23 November 1899, as reproduced in Jacques Lethève, *La Caricature et la Presse Sous la IIIe République* (Paris, Armand Colin:

1961), 119, with an incarnation of British lack of empathy. Rather than pity or assist the starving Indians before them, the tubby British officer and his wife, unmoved by their plight, choose to take photographs after the fashion of tourists.



Chapter 1: Picture 2.1 Driant's vision of the future – The Royal Navy succumbs to French submarine power.



1: Invasion! Britain and the British in French Future War Literature.

Introduction

By the end of the nineteenth century, a new and popular genre of fiction had emerged. Mass literacy and an increased emphasis on the nation, in the case of France facilitated by the 1881-2 Ferry Education Reforms, created a demand for sensationalist fiction that imagined war. Similar circumstances in other West European countries made so-called “invasion literature” a truly international phenomenon.⁵⁷ These were novels in which an author created a hypothetical future war scenario centring on an invasion, often a seaborne one of Britain. In any given story, ultimate victory would generally tend to go to which ever side the particular novel’s reading public belonged to. Failing that, the novels pointed to, and illustrated the dire consequences of, defects in the military establishments of their own authors’ nations, in order to put the case for whatever remedy the author favoured. With one retrospective eye on the particular constellation of alliances that later entered World War One, most historiographical attention has tended to focus on British novels, especially those which imagined German invasions.⁵⁸ Most prominent and enduring, *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903) by Erskine Childers (1870-1922), was very successful in its time and, still in print, is in Tombs’ opinion the best written novel of its genre.⁵⁹ However, British invasion literature was distinguished more

⁵⁷ Robert Massie, *Dreadnought Britain, Germany and the Coming of War* (New York, Random House: 1991), 630-2, I.F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War: Future Wars 1763-3749* (Oxford University Press: 1992), 3 & 94 stressing the extent to which invasion literature in all 3 countries had common tone, structure and causes, and John Ramsden, *Don’t Mention the War* (London, Little Brown: 2006), 71.

⁵⁸ See for example David French, “Spy Fever in Britain, 1900-1915” in *Historical Journal*, Vol. 21.2 (June 1978), 355-362, David A.T. Stafford, “Spies and Gentlemen: The Birth of the British Spy Novel, 1893-1914” in *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 24.4 (summer 1981), 489-509, Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), chapter 34, I.F. Clarke (ed), *The Tale of the Next Great War 1871-1914* (Liverpool University Press: 1995), I.F. Clarke (ed), *The Great War With Germany 1890-1914* (Liverpool University Press: 1997), Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (London, Penguin: 1998), chapter 1, and Ramsden, *Don’t* (2006), chapter 2. The main exceptions were I.F. Clarke, “Future War Fiction: The First Main Phase 1871-1900” in *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 24.3 (November 1997), 390, and Clarke, *Voices* (1992), chapters 2-4, again concentrating on Britain and Germany, but with extensive references to other invasion literatures, notably French and American.

⁵⁹ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 430.

by its quantity than its quality, William Le Queux (1864-1927) perhaps being more representative, paid by the number of words he produced, as from 1893 he churned out between 1 and 12 books of all kinds every year, giving a lifetime's total of nearly 200.⁶⁰ His self-consciously plain prose proved immensely popular, with invasion literature in his hands and those of many other lesser practitioners showing little pretension to subtlety, literary sophistication or depth.

Childers' *Riddle of the Sands* (1903) was significant not least because, in the context of preceding invasion literature, it signalled a gradual change of opponent in British minds.⁶¹ The shift towards regarding Germany instead of France as Britain's main enemy was replicated by Le Queux in his *The Invasion of 1910* (1906), among others; Ramsden finds that, from some 31 invasion novels published in Britain from 1900-1914, only five involved invasions of Britain from countries other than Germany, and none of these appeared after 1904.⁶² British invasion literature can therefore be interpreted as evidence of growing Anglo-German antagonism in the decade before World War I. As the novels transformed into or inspired plays and films, their authors also aspired not just to reflect official British policy, transformed in 1903-4 by the Entente Cordiale, but actively to influence it. Starting with George Chesney's (1830-95) *Battle of Dorking* (1871), a novel inspired by fears of Prussian military power so recently demonstrated against France, British invasion literature tended to advocate army reform, in particular conscription.⁶³ Le Queux's *The Invasion of 1910*, explicit in its propaganda for National Service, was written in collaboration with Field Marshal Roberts, who subsequently

⁶⁰ Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 57 & Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 428.

⁶¹ Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen", *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 24.4 (1981), 498, Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 632, Clarke, *Voices*, (1992), 118, Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 9 & Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 430.

⁶² Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 71.

⁶³ Clarke, *Tale of Next Great War* (1995), 27-73, quoting George Chesney's (1830-95) *Battle of Dorking* (1871).

promoted the book.⁶⁴ Whilst their aim was not to be achieved in peacetime, the theatre staging Guy Du Maurier's play *An Englishman's Home* (1909-10), featuring as barely disguised a set of Germans-as-invaders as the Lord Chamberlain would allow, later served, literally, as a recruiting station for the Territorial Army.⁶⁵ The advent of Britain's Secret Service Bureau (forerunner of MI5 & 6), its first head Captain Vernon Kell in correspondence with Le Queux, has also been attributed to the impact of that author's *Spies of the Kaiser* (1909).⁶⁶ After 1906, senior British ministers-Asquith, Grey, Haldane, Churchill-as well as intelligence officers, seem to have taken seriously, and occasionally acted upon, the supposed German spying and plans of invasion so vociferously publicised by Le Queux and his ilk.⁶⁷

According to I.F. Clarke, the most extensive chronicler of turn of the century future war literature, Germany had in turn been a relative latecomer to popular invasion literature, producing little of its own before 1895.⁶⁸ This situation changed when the Germans began to develop their own fleet, and to answer the British, the most prominent examples including Max Heinrichka's *100 Jahre deutsche Zukunft* (1913), August Niemann *Der Weltkrieg-Deutsche Traume* (1904) positing a joint French-Russian-German invasion of Scotland, and Karl Eisenhart *Die Abrechnung mit England* (1900) a

⁶⁴ Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen", *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 24.4 (1981), 505-506, Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 629 & 635-6, Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 255, Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 11 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 75. Former Boer War Commander-in-Chief, Roberts had resigned his post in the army to become President of the National Service League.

⁶⁵ Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 638-9, Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 126, Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 14 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 73-74.

⁶⁶ Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 14 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 77. French, "Spy Fever", *Historical Journal*, Vol. 21.2 (1978), 356-370, chronicles the relationship between Le Queux and Lieut. Colonel James Edmonds, head of MO5 after October 1906, and the continuous, after 1909 intensifying, impact of the fiction writer, his works, and the paranoia that they generated, upon real-life soldiers and politicians as well as the British population at large.

⁶⁷ Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 13-5.

⁶⁸ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 80, & I.F. Clarke, "Forecasts of Warfare in Fiction, 1803-1914" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 10.1 (October 1967), 18, which pinpoints the upsurge in German invasion literature to the start of Tirpitz's naval building programme.

German intervention against Britain in an Anglo-French war.⁶⁹ Somewhat less confrontational in their conclusions, Ferdinand Grautoff's *1906 Der Zusammenbruch der Alten Welt* (1905) and Karl Bleibtreu's *Die Offensiv Invasion gegen England* (1907) both foresaw the main consequence of an all-out war between Britain and Germany as the weakening of both powers, to the benefit of others outside of Europe.⁷⁰

However, what should not be overlooked is that before the Triple Entente had taken shape French and Russians were as likely as Germans to be the invaders imagined in Britain. Plans to build a channel tunnel in 1882 prompted a flurry of pamphlets, tracts and novels alarmed at the ease of access such a tunnel would potentially allow to an invading French army, especially if covertly assisted by French emigrants living in Britain.⁷¹ If anything, knowledge of the 1893-4 Franco-Russian alliance cranked fears up to new heights during the next 10 years.⁷² Prolific author Louis Tracy had joint French and German invasions in *The Final War* (1893) and *The Invaders* (1901), but even more strikingly, later Germanophobe Le Queux began his career as an ardent Francophobe and Russophobe.⁷³ *The Poisoned Bullet* (1893) featured a joint Franco-Russian invasion, consciously exploiting fears generated by the Franco-Russian link. *The Great War in England in 1897* (1894) found the Russian flag flying over Birmingham town hall. Chief villain of *England's Peril: A Story of the Secret Service* (1899) was Gaston Le Touche, head of a French Secret Service operating from the embassy in London.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 120-1, 118-9 & 125, Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 398-408, 87-98 & 183-201/390-8, Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 3-4 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 59.

⁷⁰ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 100, Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 202-233, Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 7 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 74.

⁷¹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 95-8 & Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 631-2.

⁷² Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 62 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 58.

⁷³ Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 4-5.

⁷⁴ Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen", *Victorian Studies*, Vol.24.4 (1981), 497, Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 58, 62 & 106, Ferguson, *Pity* (1998), 5 & Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 57.

French Invasion Literature.

Although invasion literature in France predated Germany's, its form followed rather than led developments across the channel. In particular, Chesney's 1871 novel was the self confessed template for the anonymous *Plus d'Angleterre* (1887), and seems to have been influential on the genre in France as a whole. The spark that turned most French writers' hitherto relatively sober imaginings of future war away from Germany and towards Britain was the 1882 British occupation of Egypt. In addition to *Plus*, the ensuing decade saw an outbreak of Anglo-French conflicts, notably Camille Debans, *Les Malheurs de John Bull* (1884), and Pierre Ferréol, *La Prise de Londres au XXe Siècle* (1891). It was not only the target of these new works that changed but also their tone. *Les Malheurs* was described as "a violently chauvinistic tale describing the total destruction of the British Empire" by Clarke, who notes that much the same violence and chauvinism recurred in *Plus*.⁷⁵ The title of George La Faure's *Mort Aux Anglais* (1892) left little room for ambiguity.

Whilst the British consistently produced far greater quantities of future war novels than the French, such invasion literature was hardly less popular (or lucrative) in France than in Britain.⁷⁶ Any judgements as to the quality of its readership must necessarily be at least as speculative as to its reach, but Cornick casts French invasion literature as one form of adventure novels aimed not only at adults but their offspring, forming "a prime source of adolescent distraction".⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Clarke, "Forecasts", *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 10.1 (1967), 12.

⁷⁶ Clarke, "Forecasts", *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 10.1 (1967), 18, notes "no less than three English accounts of future warfare for every specimen of la guerre imaginaire" across 1880-1900, German authors in turn producing less than half the volume of the French.

⁷⁷ Martyn Cornick, "Representations of Britain and British Colonialism in French Adventure Fiction, 1870-1914" in *French Cultural Studies*, Vol 17.2 (June 2006), 138, and "'Perfidious Albion'", Dutton, *Statecraft* (1995), 20.

France's nearest equivalent to Le Queux was Captain Emile Augustin Cyprien Driant (1855-1916), who published nearly 30 novels across a quarter of a century. Many of these were multi volume efforts. As a serving French army officer up to 1906 Driant customarily wrote under the pseudonym Capitaine Danrit. The militaristic, nationalistic and somewhat romanticized conservatism apparent in his work found its roots in his life. Having from 1875-7 passed through St Cyr, Driant emerged as an infantry officer, from 1884 serving in Tunisia under General Boulanger. He continued this connection once back in France, to the extent of serving as Boulanger's ADC, marrying one of his daughters Marcelle in 1887, and in 1892 publicly defending the memory of his now deceased father in law in the columns of *Le Figaro*. Following 4 years as instructor at St Cyr appointed Chef de Corps at Troyes in July 1899, Driant remained there until the end of his military career in garrison, creating the Ligue Anti Maçonnique for men and the Ligue de Jeanne d'Arc for women. In the political climate after the separation of Church and state, Driant had little further prospect of peacetime advancement, now that control of army appointments had shifted to the Minister of War, the dedicated anti clerical André.⁷⁸ Passed over for promotion for 5 successive years after 1900, Driant left the army on 31 December 1905.⁷⁹ Abandoning any restraint in expressing his political views, Driant was elected Deputy for Nancy in 1910, under the umbrella of Catholic-Conservative Action Libérale. In politics he concentrated on military affairs, notably the debate over extending the length of conscription, before rejoining the army in August 1914, ultimately to be killed in the Bois des Caures on 22 February 1916, the second day of the German offensive at Verdun.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Alistair Horne, *The French Army and Politics, 1870-1970* (New York, Peter Bedrick Books: 1984), 25.

⁷⁹ Horne, *French Army* (1984), 26.

⁸⁰ Clarke, "Forecasts", *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 10.1 (1967), 16, Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 101, Clarke, "Future War", *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 393-394, Richard Holmes, "Driant", in Richard Holmes (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford University Press: 2001), Cornick, "Representations", *French Cultural Studies* Vol 17.2 (2006), 148, and www.roman-daventures.com/auteurs/france/danrit 11 September 2008.

Testimony to the popularity of French invasion literature, like Le Queux Driant published prodigious amounts, beginning with the 3 part, 6 volume *La Guerre de Demain* (1888-1893). This opened with a surprise German attack on France, treating at length various tactical aspects of the ensuing war.⁸¹ Later novels, also divided into 3 volumes, imagined the invasion of Europe by Africans led by the Ottoman Empire-*La Guerre au Xxe Siècle*; *L’Invasion Noire* (1894) - as well as Japan/China/India in *L’Invasion Jaune* (1909). In the intervening years, some of his shorter works evoked Napoleon and highlighted the new inventions, especially aircraft and submarines, that, in contrast to Jules Verne’s peaceful innovations, changed and intensified warfare.⁸² Whilst lacking the influence on official policy enjoyed by Le Queux, Driant’s work did reflect and shape a current of popular Anglophobia. As Tombs asserts of invasion literature: “if English books were nightmares of vulnerability, French books were fantasies of revenge”.⁸³ This was certainly true of *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (1902-3), whose last volume first appeared in the same year as Erskine Childers’ *Riddle of the Sands*. This 3 volume series represented an Anglophobic apogee in Driant’s oeuvre.

Driant was by no means alone as a prominent author of French future war literature. Originally published in the early 1880s, Albert Robida’s (1848-1926) *La Guerre au Vingtième Siècle* (1887) imagined an attempted invasion of Europe by an unspecified “enemy” in early 1945.⁸⁴ Although taking a French hero, and based in the concerns of the 1880s, this concentrated on the future inventions and weaponry that would shape the

⁸¹ Clarke, “Forecasts”, *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 10.1 (1967), 16, Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 76 & 102-3 & Clarke, “Future War”, *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 394-396.

⁸² Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 66-7, attributed Verne’s disinclination to explore “the military possibilities implicit in his stories” to his temperament, although Clarke, “Future War”, *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 388, points to Driant having dedicated *L’Invasion Noire* to Verne.

⁸³ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 429.

⁸⁴ Clarke, *Tale of Next Great War* (1995), 95-112, 380 & 367 which explains that the work first appeared in *La Caricature* in October 1883, before publication in amended form as a book. Robida insinuated that the anonymous “enemy” may come from the Americas.

war rather than on any national enemy.⁸⁵ Of more immediate relevance to its time, the “very successful *Plus d’Angleterre* (1887)”, appearing 15 years before *Guerre Fatale*, went through 6 editions in less than a year, and was even translated for publication in Britain, exciting a short pamphlet by way of rebuttal.⁸⁶ Such exchanges were two way. British speculation from *The Sun*, in December 1899 imagined a complete dismemberment of France by 1910 with Britain annexing the north and west. This provoked angry responses from Paris newspapers.⁸⁷ The French press also kept interest in the invasion novel alive by publishing occasional short stories. One of these was Henri de Noussanne’s *La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe*, which appeared in *Le Monde Illustré* on 10 March 1900. Described by Clarke as a “most enthusiastic account of the defeat of the British in a future war”, this made its way to the Foreign Office in London under cover of a report by Sir Edmond Monson, British ambassador in Paris.⁸⁸

Three Case Studies.

As Clarke suggests, the anonymous tale of 1887 laid out an “apocalyptic vision of triumph and revenge in which the British suffered a swift and humiliating defeat”, setting up “a formula of vengeance and victory” followed by other authors writing in the same vein.⁸⁹ In the three cases of *Plus d’Angleterre* (1887), *La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe* (1900) and *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (1902-3), the action starts outside continental Europe or metropolitan Britain, reflecting the colonial nature of most of the differences between Britain and France. In all three stories, those extra European confrontations ultimately entail warfare in Europe and a successful French invasion of

⁸⁵ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 81-3, Clarke, “Future War”, *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 398, placing Robida’s narrative in “the never-never void of a fantastic future-history”, and see also Robert Hendrick, “Albert Robida’s Imperfect Future” in *History Today*, Vol 48.7 (July 1998), 27-32.

⁸⁶ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 53 & Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 429: Anon, *Plus Encore d’Angleterre or, the Repulse of the French* (London, Simpkin Marshall & Co: 1888).

⁸⁷ *La Libre Parole* 16, *La Liberté* 17, *Le Petit Journal*, 18, *L’Autorité*, 18 & 19, and *Le Matin*, 16 December 1899.

⁸⁸ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 2 & *National Archives*, FO 27/3494.115, Monson to Salisbury, 15 March 1900.

⁸⁹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 53.

southern England, culminating in an entry into London, then the imposition by France of a peace treaty upon the British.⁹⁰ By far the longest and most detailed of the three were Driant's 1,350 pages, but this book displayed obvious parallels with the first, suggesting a fundamental continuity of attitudes on the parts of both the authors and their readers.

In *Plus d'Angleterre* and *Guerre Fatale* French interests are served by a generous dose of good luck, especially relating to Germany. Both depict Germany as self-interested and acquisitive, but, at the point of crisis in the imagined Anglo-French confrontation, too preoccupied with coincidental opportunities to profit from Austrian decline to intervene in favour of Britain. Where *Plus* forecast an Austrian internal collapse, Driant staged the death of the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, both scenarios enabling German territorial acquisitions in the east which compensated for losing Alsace Lorraine to France.⁹¹ Russian strength was a further contributory factor in *Guerre Fatale*. The outcomes of the books also bear strong similarities, and not merely in French acquisition of new territory. Britain, "rejetée au rang de puissance secondaire" in Driant's story, is obliged to pay an indemnity of 10 milliards, reparations that, in similar fashion to *Plus*, go to finance a channel tunnel, its island end to be permanently garrisoned by French troops from Deal to Dover.⁹²

All three pieces put forward a simple, linear narrative that ended in at most 6 months in a definitive destruction of British power, a military occupation of London, without French armies needing to penetrate much further north or west as the subjection of the rest of Britain was taken for granted, to be shortly followed by the relegation of Britain,

⁹⁰ For more detail on plotlines, see Appendix 1. Anon, *Plus d'Angleterre* (Paris, Paul Ollendorff Editeur: 1887). Henri de Noussanne, "La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe", in *Le Monde Illustré*, 10 March 1900, 146-168, and Capitaine Danrit, *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (Paris, Ernest Flammarion: 1902-3), 3 Vols.

⁹¹ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 160 & Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 74-86.

⁹² Anon, *Plus* (1887), 161 & Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 445

stripped of much of its Empire, to subordinate status. Driant's *L'Invasion Noire* had taken this a stage further by splitting mainland Britain into its 3 constituent kingdoms, England to be run by a Danish King, although *Plus* and *Guerre Fatale* satisfied themselves with an independent Ireland. Equally, the language of the novels, like that of Le Queux, was plain and uncomplicated, the most notable exception to this being the technical descriptions. Although *Plus* more than once alluded favourably to the effects of Melinite used by French artillery, by far the lengthiest of these appeared in *Guerre Fatale*.⁹³ Its plot heavily depended on the employment of submarines, weapons of the future. Much space was therefore devoted to description of these, and tactics in their employment, especially in volume 2, "ce livre consacrée à la glorification de sous-marin".⁹⁴ However, Driant, having the military background that he did, punctuated the entire work with pontification on everything from torpedo boat development to comparative bayonet lengths.⁹⁵

This description of what was, essentially, hardware, together with the prose, complimented the woodenness of Driant's characterisations and subplots, which were also reliant on a series of happy coincidences.⁹⁶ The hero Argonne's "haine feroce" for Britain was only natural and inevitable for a Breton and someone in love with Irish nationalist Maud Carthy, "la jeune fille dont l'incomparable beauté, attristée par cette souffrance intérieure, incarna bientôt à ses yeux l'irlande héroïque et martyre".⁹⁷ The

⁹³ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 101-104.

⁹⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 184.

⁹⁵ E.G. Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 220-4 (deployment of coastal defence troops), 267-70 (development of torpedo boats), 360-4 (the use of ships from pre fabricated parts), Vol 2, 6-7, 155-78, (submarines), 77-82 (diving suits), 219-21, 244-8 (anti submarine techniques), Vol 3, 93-100 (different types of submarine), 136-46 (landing boats, infantry personal equipment), 172-2 (semaphores), 181 (bayonets), 288-90 (formation of British volunteer units). See also Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 76-7.

⁹⁶ For example Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 366 with Dhurr chancing to meet his former commanding officer at the submarine factory he and Smith were sabotaging-so edging his conscience towards returning to his patriotic duty as a French soldier-and 387 Argonne chooses a ship's boy whose mother happens to have once known another crew member, who therefore re-meets and later marries her.

⁹⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 47- Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 429, agrees Argonne is "a predestined Anglophobe".

depiction of *Guerre Fatale*'s principal villain, the fat intriguer Walter Smith, was equally flat and one dimensional. *Plus* had taken this a step further not only by dispensing with fictitious characters altogether but in its almost complete disengagement with any individual people at all. Indeed, hardly anyone was named throughout the entire book, and when they were it was often because they were already historical figures.⁹⁸ Once past the introductory chapter, contemporary figures were referred to merely by their job title, even "l'orgueilleuse vieille reine" who could only have been Victoria.⁹⁹ This curiously depersonalised tone, casting the conflict in terms of wider forces and groups, was replicated by *Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe* to some extent, although lack of space here may have prevented long digressions on the characters of Marchand, Kitchener, Cromer, Jamont and others who fleetingly appeared in the plot.

Britain and the British in French Invasion Literature.

The tone of all 3 works, unsurprisingly, was hostile towards British power, foreign policy and, in large measure, the British themselves. Unlike some of the German authors, they had no hidden agenda in depicting their wars with Britain, and no reason to present a continental invasion of Britain as anything other than an unambiguously good thing.¹⁰⁰ The impersonal approach of *Plus d'Angleterre* did not stop prolonged justifications as to why France should fight Britain. Its opening 21 pages explained why "L'ennemi, c'est l'Anglais... Il faut ouvrir les yeux ou périr".¹⁰¹ Common views of French history were offered, detailing events across the entire century from the English oligarchy financing the rest of Europe to fight Napoleon, to Britain finding excuses for Bismarck's behaviour in the 1887 Schnaebelé incident and fermenting a Franco-German

⁹⁸ For example Anon, *Plus* (1887), pages 4 General Willoughby, 6 Pritchard and Napoleon III, 13 Wellington and Wolseley & 38 Macmahon.

⁹⁹ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 26.

¹⁰⁰ For example in Ferdinand Grautoff, *1906 Der Zusammenbruch der Alten Welt* (1905), quoted by Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 213, which in contending that Anglo-German war would harm both sides, could for example logically present Royal Navy seamen as courageous and honourable, and to be treated as such, even when defeated.

¹⁰¹ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 5-6.

conflict that would be in the interests of neither combatant.¹⁰² Contemporary grievances, such as British coastguards' "brutalité sans pareille" towards French fishermen in the Channel and off Newfoundland, intertwined with this history.¹⁰³ These particular behaviours on the international stage are supported, despite a complacent British disregard for the warnings of Chesney's "fiction ingénieuse la bataille de Dorking", by "l'orgueil imbécile du gros de la nation... jingoisme... était un institution nationale... tout étranger, un être inférieur, méprisable".¹⁰⁴ Centuries of colonial thefts then economic exploitation, sucking the rest of the world dry whilst giving nothing in return, would make the defeat of Britain "une délivrance générale".¹⁰⁵ According to *Plus*, France had particular reason to instigate such an end. British arrogance and "l'insolence des journaux" founded an undying, perpetual, hatred for the French amongst all British; "Cette main est anglaise. Nous la connaissons depuis des siècles, brutale ou hypocrite, toujours la même, ne se crispant jamais avec bonheur qu'autour de la gorge d'un français".¹⁰⁶

Such a rendition of stock grievances and British characteristics was largely absent from the briefer *Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe* which saw in its war a retributive lesson for Britain, but modified and expanded upon in *Guerre Fatale*. Although Tombs maintains that in general invasion literature "did not go in for stimulating visceral national hatred", in addressing this particular novel Crouzet and Cornick seem nearer the mark in highlighting "des passages d'une violence indicible contre les britanniques", or even judging it "shot through with a violent hatred of the English".¹⁰⁷ Driant combined

¹⁰² Anon, *Plus* (1887), 6, 8 & 18-9. Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 107, added that Driant's early work *Guerre de Demain* followed the example of *Plus* in aligning British interests with German.

¹⁰³ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 4-5.

¹⁰⁴ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 13.

¹⁰⁵ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 11.

¹⁰⁶ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 14 & 6.

¹⁰⁷ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 429, Crouzet, "communication franco-britannique", *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 125 and Cornick, "Perfidious Albion", Dutton, *Statecraft* (1995), 22.

contradictory ideas of British condescension, stiffness, unsympathetic nature, concern for form, brutality and pursuit of money in the hero Argonne's comment that:

Partout où passe l'Anglais, il se fait détester pour sa morgue dédaigneuse, son manque absolu de tact et de savoir vivre. Ultra correct chez lui, sur toute la surface du globe son avidité est en quête d'une proie, son impudence s'exerce... quand il attaque aux faibles, ce qui est devenue pour lui un habitude lucrative, il devient odieux.¹⁰⁸

Similar self-consciously contradictory sentiments about "cette Angleterre hostile... mais insaisissable, rapace mais prudente, arrogante mais pratique" riddle the entire novel on repeated occasions.¹⁰⁹ To these qualities were added hypocrisy, egoism, international banditry, and a hitherto convincing veil of bluff that concealed the real weakness of "l'idole aux pieds d'argile".¹¹⁰

Driant showed least restraint in creating the fictitious villain Walter Smith, a character who followed in the footsteps of *Guerre de Demain* (1888-93)'s British "John Byde, a pantomime spy with long teeth, side whiskers, an impossible French accent and an immense arrogance, who operates in the German interest with a comical lack of success".¹¹¹ A Le Queux British secret agent was "quintessentially a gentlemen", an affluent and upright man who tended to turn to spying as an amateur activity, and solely for the sake of national defence in the face of underhand foreign machinations.¹¹² In contrast, Driant's British spy is a self-made man, acting for money, and treacherous to the core. He is the immoral product "de mère anglaise et de père inconnu" in a Whitechapel "établissement interlope demi taverne et demi tripot".¹¹³ Cosmopolitan and ruthlessly acquisitive, Smith married in Africa the widow of a multi-millionaire whose death he might have caused, the widow in turn disappearing during an Indian mountain

¹⁰⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 47.

¹⁰⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 10.

¹¹⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 73 & 458.

¹¹¹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 107.

¹¹² Stafford, "Spies and Gentlemen", *Victorian Studies*, Vol.24.4 (1981), 491 & 508.

¹¹³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 138.

expedition when Smith learned of her desire to control her own fortune, then he made another fortune in Australia where he married a Greek. This corrupt “oiseau de proie” settled in Egypt, to become “un agent précieux de la politique secrète anglaise” across the Mediterranean.¹¹⁴ Whereas *Plus* merely attacked French Anglophiles, Driant went much further, in hating cosmopolitanism of any kind.¹¹⁵ “Les cosmopolites et les sans-patrie” were the most open to British bribery, and hence employment as spies.¹¹⁶ Smith’s career allowed vent for Driant’s sentiments. Speculating in Cuban property across 1897-8 had enabled Smith to acquire US naturalization. When apprehended by Argonne in the act of spying on defences in Tunisia, he was thus able to plead his status as US consul in Cairo to secure his release.¹¹⁷ Smith’s daughter Eva, born of his Greek wife in 1884, most embodies this to Argonne (and Driant) repulsive “monde cosmopolite qui n’a pas de patrie et qui sert celle qui lui rapporte le plus”.¹¹⁸ She is cast in express opposition to Maud Carthy, Argonne’s fiancée. Of a “Levantine” and worldly appearance next to “cette grâce virginale” of Maud upon whom she threatens revenge, Eva (for reasons Driant did not bother to explain, and despite her full involvement in her father’s spying) fell in love with Argonne but was foredoomed never to win him.¹¹⁹ In further happy coincidences, Eva, at a crucial point in the plot, saves Argonne from the machinations of her father, but Driant spared himself the distasteful (or perhaps impossible!) task of redeeming her by having her jump off the top of a cliff to her death at the end of Volume 2.¹²⁰

¹¹⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 402 & 143.

¹¹⁵ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 9 & 37.

¹¹⁶ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 364.

¹¹⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 144 & 159.

¹¹⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 60, 144 & 210.

¹¹⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 211-2.

¹²⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 450, 461-462 & 464-7.

Whilst Driant made great play of Britain's use not only of spies, but "mercenaries", he was occasionally able to concede some merit.¹²¹ Allegations of British cowardice prompted by "les mouchoirs blancs des soldats d'Edouard VII" in their attack on Bizerta, or previously in South Africa where "il y avait des soldats anglais chez lesquels le métier de prisonnier était une vocation", were balanced by later acceptance that a long serving kernel of their army would fight vigorously once on home ground, of the enthusiastic (if ineffective and badly led) public school and Oxbridge cadet volunteers, the loyal "mutisme" of the London press, and the patriotic civil population in Kent refusing to give any information or help to the invaders.¹²² Driant's perceptions of the characters of the British Generals, i.e. Roberts: "un homme froid, perspicace et sachant regarder en face d'une situation difficile", Buller: "le type de véritable Anglais qui, lorsqu'il a un but à atteindre, se met des oeillères comme les chevaux, pour ne rien voir sinon ce but", and the unscrupulous, cruel, "chef sans entrailles" Kitchener, were not entirely negative.¹²³ However, none of this went far in mitigating a perpetual and mutual antipathy, "la haine qui séparait les deux peuples", which had persisted despite their fighting side by side in a Crimean war brought about by "une diplomatie perfide" on the part of Britain.¹²⁴ Argonne's first officer might confess "j'admire l'Angleterre... un animal bien enformé... Il est solide, entraîné, insolent, cruel et grossier" but his desire to exterminate superseded any feelings of admiration.¹²⁵ The topographical detail with which Driant wrote about British sites, and the physical trappings within the Houses of Parliament in Volume 3, suggested that he had actually been to England. This paralleled

¹²¹ E.G. Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), spying at Vol 1, 404, 410 & 414, Vol 2, 301, Vol 3 3 & 430, mercenaries Vol 1, 239, Vol 2 214 & 372, Vol 3, 219, 220, 353 & 399.

¹²² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 260, 394, Vol 3 185-91, 198, 406, 288 & 253.

¹²³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 306, 400 & 405.

¹²⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 158

¹²⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 417.

the author of *Plus* on Hastings, Tunbridge Wells and the land surrounding them.¹²⁶ However, familiarity with the British was no solution for peace. Instead, Driant opined, “le Français de Londres déteste encore plus l’Anglais que le Français de Paris, le connaissant mieux”.¹²⁷ Further, “la haine de l’Anglais” was with justification universal across all European nations.¹²⁸

Although Driant was quite clearly writing in a long established Anglophobe tradition, he drew on broadly Anglophile or neutral observations too. Taine, Boutmy or the 1899-1903 London-Thames paintings of Claude Monet could have inspired him temporarily to frustrate the actions of his French invaders with “un de ces brouillards, comme il en tombe si fréquemment en Angleterre”.¹²⁹ Likewise, references to British drunkenness were to find their echo in the later work of Pierre Hamp.¹³⁰ On more specific issues, Driant echoed many other writers. Ironically, his suggestion that what the British army needed was promotion “des plus méritants et non des plus riches”, and conscription to fill the ranks, on the first point reflected what was already happening, and on the second exactly what a long line of British writers, from Chesney to Le Queux, had been arguing for decades.¹³¹ In *Plus*, the British Parliament was derided for its intolerance towards minority views, greeted by “tumulte, comme savent faire les chambres anglaises: grognements, cris de chien, de coq, d’âne, etc”.¹³² The pressure of invasion forced a pragmatic departure from parliamentary precedent. “La constitution pour les Anglais n’était qu’un habit de cérémonie qu’ils savaient jeter bas aux heures de crise”, so a 30

¹²⁶ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 100-1 & 107. Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 325, suggests, however, that many of the authors consulted guide books and town plans, rather than travelling to the sites they describe as Chesney had in researching *The Battle of Dorking* (1871)-Clarke, *Tale of Next Great War* (1995), 365.

¹²⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 318-319.

¹²⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 48 & 372.

¹²⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 256.

¹³⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 280, Vol 2, 464 & Vol 3, 113, citing whisky as the “breuvage national” and Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 152.

¹³¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 120-2 & 215.

¹³² Anon, *Plus* (1887), 34.

MP commission was appointed to negotiate with the French.¹³³ Driant made exactly the same point about “ce pays des antiques traditions et des vieilles perruques” when an armed stranger entered parliament for a first time, and the “formalisme rigide qui avait toujours présidé aux actes de la vie politique ployait devant les nécessités du moment” to allow both houses to mix in debate over whether to surrender London.¹³⁴

In highlighting the flexibility and the tradition of the British constitution, *Plus* and *Guerre Fatale* showed the imprint of Taine and Boutmy, but their depiction of British class and society owed more to Michelet’s focus on social inequality. The start of *Plus* found “la plèbe...cette mob anglais” of the East End still loyal to the sovereign, if sceptical of her ministers, later to be wooed by Socialists, to invade the Admiralty and, driven by hunger, to pillage the docks.¹³⁵ This was all aggravated by “la plus grosse de ces crises industrielles” that periodically drained the economy for, in implicit contrast to France, “l’Angleterre n’était qu’une immense usine employant des millions d’individus”, millions who could not eat if the factories shut.¹³⁶ Conscious of class antagonisms, the invading French General’s proclamation declares “nous ne voulons pas conquérir votre sol... La République Française ne veut pas faire la guerre au peuple anglais” but only on “cette minorité qui vous opprime”.¹³⁷ A particular glee was to be derived from British rather than French divisions deciding the outcome of a war as “le peuple allait jouer en Angleterre le rôle dont il était coutumier chez nous dans les grandes crises, mais avec bien plus d’âpreté”.¹³⁸ *Guerre Fatale* varies only slightly from this line; here, there is greater expansion on the indifference of British “ploutocratie avide et sans scrupules” and army officers towards the common man, and the economic

¹³³ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 125-6.

¹³⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 346 & 351.

¹³⁵ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 26, 89 & 124.

¹³⁶ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 39 & 124.

¹³⁷ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 87.

¹³⁸ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 89.

problems result not from chance but French naval disruption to British imports.¹³⁹ Driant's message was therefore slightly different from the wider moral point about British industrialisation made in *Plus*. It remained more focussed on the need to develop a powerful navy capable of blockading Britain. Otherwise, Driant's disruption initially ferments strikes which, driven by starvation, only later transform into riots, fires and a welcome for the arriving French invaders.¹⁴⁰ The imagined contrast between "la foule des révoltés hurlant à la faim et entourant un gouvernement désarmé" and "l'armée française... cent mille soldats disciplinés, confiants dans leur chefs, enfiévrés par le souffle de victoire" epitomised an ideal to which France ought to aspire as much as what the writer thought of Britain.¹⁴¹

Heroes and Villains: the French in French Invasion Literature.

Guerre Fatale and to a lesser extent *Plus* articulated contrasts between British and French characters, and opinions on what the French were, or ought to be. At the heart of it, and explaining British lack of conscription or "soldats digne de ce nom", were, Driant felt, the differences between "d'un côté un peuple mercantile, de l'autre un peuple guerrier".¹⁴² In reflecting that "les siècles avaient transformé les armes et les costumes, ils avaient laissé intacte l'âme des deux nations", Driant subscribed to the notion of immutable national character.¹⁴³ French character was epitomised in the spirit of "la lutte face à face, poitrine contre poitrine, voilà la guerre rationnelle, saine, morale où la victoire est au plus brave, au plus fort, la vraie guerre française en un mot".¹⁴⁴ The bayonet, "L'arme blanche, l'arme française", symbolised this most, as bayonet wielding French professional soldiers successively killed the best of the British defenders, struck

¹³⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 216, 402, Vol 3, 73 & 220.

¹⁴⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 402, Vol 3, 335-7 & 358.

¹⁴¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 337-8.

¹⁴² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 123 & 338.

¹⁴³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 414.

¹⁴⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 300.

fear into the hearts of British militia and volunteers who fled at the sight of them, and finished off Lord Roberts' last stand.¹⁴⁵ In that sense, *Guerre Fatale* combined the best innovations that science had to offer warfare with a fundamental and insuperable élan which had no need of modern weapons, both to the advantage of France.

Whereas *Plus* had little in the way of characterisation, merely “presenting an idealized vision of a dedicated nation triumphing over the despised enemy”, Driant had ample space to create fictional heroes.¹⁴⁶ The submariner Henri d'Argonne and Vice Consul at Malta, Raoul Petitet, are introduced at the very start of *Guerre Fatale*, collectively representing the naval officers and diplomats who, alone amongst the French, in contrast to the politicians, come to face to face with and understand the brutality and arrogance of the British.¹⁴⁷ Both issue from well-established families and are social equals.¹⁴⁸ Argonne remains central throughout *Guerre Fatale*, especially in volume 2 captaining a submarine whose crew – a Meridional, a Basque, and a Flamand “de l'autre extrémité de la diagonale française”- is a French nation in miniature.¹⁴⁹ Equally symbolically, their attachment to their officers is deemed of crucial importance, underlining the need for a nation to be united and behind its established elites. Argonne himself is resourceful, intelligent, bold and always one step ahead of his opponents, as well as showing a humane and paternalistic side, saving a Breton submariner from alcoholism and later scrupulously refusing to put foreign passengers in irons when on a packet boat under threat of sinking from a British cruiser.¹⁵⁰ Seemingly coming along for the ride, on the submarine, Petitet shows a fear of diving that highlights Argonne's courage, but

¹⁴⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 380, 190-1, 198 & 287.

¹⁴⁶ Clarke, “Forecasts”, *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 21.2 (1967), 12.

¹⁴⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 10.

¹⁴⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 204 & 209, affirming the proposed marriage of Petitet to Argonne's sister as the union of two military families, and describing the activities of Petitet's father, a Colonel under Bazaine, in 1870-1.

¹⁴⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 54.

¹⁵⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 82 & Vol 2, 37.

otherwise he acquits himself well as a secondary hero.¹⁵¹ Suggesting the unity between armed forces and civilian population Petitot latterly rejoins his old regiment, and thus fights on the land as part of the invading force in volume 3.¹⁵²

In singling out Britain, both heroes depart from the received wisdom that France's real enemy was to be found across the Rhine. The question of whether Britain or Germany presented the greater threat was one only touched upon as Driant seems to have regarded the answer as a foregone conclusion. Partly, the debate was born of inter service rivalries. It is an army officer, Dufau, who initially maintains "la querelle définitive et décisive à régler, c'est la querelle avec l'Allemagne", until the British attack on Tunisia changes his mind with his dying words "l'ennemi, c'est l'Anglais".¹⁵³ Germany otherwise was depicted as acquisitive, and ready to dishonour its international commitments to suit its own interests, with Italian policy all but determined by German actions.¹⁵⁴ Most of Smith's spies and saboteurs are also Italian, his amorality further underlined by the most prominent, Gigas, being a Sicilian Mafios.¹⁵⁵

Although "La race française est la race guerrière par excellence parce qu'elle est riche en audacieux", this did not mean that all Frenchmen were heroic like Argonne and Petitot.¹⁵⁶ Where an individual Frenchman does go wrong in Driant's story, it is through weakness, not evil intention. Louis Dhurr, a promising army Lieutenant, was led into the web of British spies not by an active desire for treachery but as a result of gambling debts into which he was trapped by British spymaster Baron Gloscher, "l'homme qui

¹⁵¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 28-29.

¹⁵² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 394.

¹⁵³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 108, 112-113 & 229.

¹⁵⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 394-396, stating that the Kaiser had dropped his alliance with Britain to pursue his claims on the territory of the disintegrating Austro-Hungarian Empire, leaving Italy with no choice but to try and prevent Trieste from becoming German, and Vol 3, 76-86, chronicling how the rivalry of these powers played out.

¹⁵⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 410-414, & Vol 2, 436.

¹⁵⁶ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 254.

connaît le prix de consciences”.¹⁵⁷ The cost to Dhurr of avoiding a scandal was his theft of mobilisation plans from the safe of his Colonel.¹⁵⁸ Becoming a spy under duress, Dhurr deserted, and remained one in large measure out of a misguided love for Walter Smith’s daughter: “elle a poussé au déshonneur l’homme qu’elle aime, elle lui retire cet amour même et le laisse rouler dans l’abîme”.¹⁵⁹ No match for the worldly and manipulative Eva, Dhurr remains in thrall to her until news of her death leaves him with no reason to carry on spying when the need of his nation calls him back to his proper duty. Having confronted, subdued and branded Glosher on the face with the word “spy”, Dhurr revenges himself on the British by spying on their defences, then, with the help of Argonne, rejoining the army to fight in Britain.¹⁶⁰ At the side of Petitet, Dhurr rediscovers his original Frenchness, earning praise for his disregard for death, affording Driant the opportunity to glorify war in a romanticised tableau of Dhurr leading a bayonet charge to recapture his former regiment’s flag, then, having earned forgiveness from the lips of the dying Colonel, himself smiling in “la mort libératrice”.¹⁶¹ Driant explicitly narrated Dhurr’s story as a path of remorse, expiation and redemption facilitated by the forgiveness of Argonne then the Colonel, in the spirit of “la religion chrétienne, une religion de pardon”.¹⁶² In this way, Dhurr, and by implication all Frenchmen, can be led astray, but retain some element of a fundamental nature in contrast to the British, and can be welcomed back at any time into the fold of their generous and paternalistic nation.

France’s heroes stood to be undermined by other villains, politicians in particular. This theme had already appeared in *Plus*, which opened with equivocating ministers saying

¹⁵⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 4.

¹⁵⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 318-9.

¹⁵⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 315.

¹⁶⁰ Cornick, “Representations”, *French Cultural Studies* Vol 17.2 (2006), 151 and Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 2-24, 33-9 & 53.

¹⁶¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 368-84.

¹⁶² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 63.

nothing or denying the possibility of war, even as hitherto disparate deputies united when faced with the international crisis, eventually to force the government's hand.¹⁶³ At this stage, before the end of the Boulanger crisis and the advent of the Dreyfus case, the democratic and patriotic aspects of the Republican tradition had yet to separate, with the result that *Plus* shows the leader of the left pressing the minister, demanding a British apology and moving to vote credits for war.¹⁶⁴ Conversely, France's position risked being undermined by credulous speculators on the Bourse, and at least one presumably anti Republican deputy of the right, "très connu par ses nombreuses amitiés dans l'aristocratie anglaise", backed by an Anglophile Liberal press.¹⁶⁵ *La Guerre Fatale* singled out Anarchist protestors rejected by the "vrai peuple de Paris", but was critical of all politicians as such, whatever their allegiance.¹⁶⁶ It was they who had failed to foresee the nearest and most dangerous foe for what it was.¹⁶⁷ Foreshadowing later German invasion literature critical of the Reichstag, Driant blamed the Third Republic's political system for French weakness, in the form of constant changes "de plan et de tactic navale...par suite de l'instabilité ministérielle", and indecisive legislators who had not acted on the idea of a French canal to connect Mediterranean and Atlantic.¹⁶⁸ Despite the patriotic inspiration of France's mass army, even its system of conscription as it stood in 1902-3 was not above criticism.¹⁶⁹

Driant idealised war in part because of its perceived capacity for reconciling hitherto truculent internal interests, hence his story has newly united deputies and Senators

¹⁶³ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 2, 5 & 37.

¹⁶⁴ R.D.Anderson, *France 1870-1914 Politics and Society* (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul: 1977), 91 & 111 and Anon, *Plus* (1887), 5, 29 & 37.

¹⁶⁵ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 24, 37 & 38.

¹⁶⁶ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 367-8.

¹⁶⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 9-10.

¹⁶⁸ Karl Bleibtreu, *Die Offensiv Invasion gegen England* (1907), lampooned the Reichstag "where wheeling and dealing always comes before the national good" for its failure to allow sufficient resources for an appropriate rate of construction for the navy - Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 230. Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 297 & Vol 2, 256

¹⁶⁹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 122.

voting credits, the press suppressing all but officially sanctioned news of the war and mob rule forcing “cette bande cosmopolite qui avait empoisonné la presse française” to alter their line.¹⁷⁰ During the conflict, Driant’s war had a cathartic effect on France as “la hideuse politique ne divise plus les Français... La France se réveille”.¹⁷¹ The process of national re-awakening did not end with the peace, however for “Le danger, l’effort commune, la victoire surtout avaient fait disparaître les vieilles querelles qui longtemps avaient bouleversé le pays”.¹⁷² In the absence of political ambition on the part of the returning victorious French general, war served as an antidote to workers’ “chimeriques illusions du partage des biens et de l’égalité à l’outrance”, and, with the flight of internationalists and cosmopolitans from the country, Driant had accounted for all of his villains, leaving Argonne and Petitet to marry, and their country to prosper free of British power.¹⁷³ This dream of sectional, class and political unity in France ran through much of Driant’s work, whether the main enemy was British, German or other, and was clearly therefore of great intrinsic importance to him irrespective of the particular conflict being imagined.¹⁷⁴

Conclusion

Popular Invasion Literature in France, a product of widespread literacy after 1880, offers insight into how Britain and the British were regarded by that large section of the French public that bought and read *Le Monde Illustré* or such works as *Plus d’Angleterre* and *Guerre Fatale* in the quantities that they did. These works suggest lines of fundamental continuity in perceptions across a 16 year period encompassing the turn of the century, and possibly even beyond 1903. Attitudes towards Britain featured prominently, but so

¹⁷⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 364-5, Vol 2, 8 & 274.

¹⁷¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 388.

¹⁷² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 448.

¹⁷³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 449, 450, 448 & 450-4. Walter Smith was released at the end of the war, to be quickly killed in revenge by a former admirer of his first wife.

¹⁷⁴ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 104.

did internal French preoccupations, not merely ones to do with narrow issues directly bearing on the armed forces but a wider scepticism about the politicians of the Third Republic and the need for national unity, in an essentially conservative vision of social order and a chauvinistic rejection of internationalism. Further, *Plus* and *Guerre Fatale* attacked not just British policies but the British themselves, suggesting a broader Anglophobia that underpinned criticism of British actions on the international stage. On the face of it, a lack of real animosity might be inferred from the disclaimer fronting *Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe* (1900), remarking that the British had so long been publishing and reading fictitious accounts of their own defeat at German or French hands that they should not be offended by a new French story doing the same.¹⁷⁵ This, however, was qualified by the comment that Britain and Empire were on the verge of inevitable decline, and indeed the nature of the story itself, here and elsewhere. Driant's work was not even the most extreme when compared to the invective of *Mort Aux Anglais*, which hinged upon the Gulf Stream being reversed, and the British population therefore frozen to death.¹⁷⁶ By the time of *Guerre Fatale*, new contexts and warfare were beginning to emerge, but the old stereotypes continued in large measure to reappear.¹⁷⁷ Invasion literature acted as a gauge of immediate concerns whilst at the same time falling squarely within one of several already established French discourses on Britain.

¹⁷⁵ Clarke, "Forecasts", *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 10.1 (1967), 4 and de Noussanne, "Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe", *Monde Illustré*, 10 March 1900.

¹⁷⁶ Clarke, "Future War", *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 391 & 409.

¹⁷⁷ This continued in some cases, notably Driant's, even after 1904 – See Appendix 1.

2: L'Ecole des Sciences Politiques and the British.

Introduction.

Very different from the popular genre of French future war novels, which were usually strongly Anglophobic in tone, were the more academic and high-minded works of the group of writers associated with the Paris based Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques (ELSP). Taking their lead from Taine, and his many publications, and his intellectual disciple Émile Boutmy (1835-1906), they included individuals like the historian Albert Sorel (1842-1906) and liberal economist Paul Leroy-Beaulieu (1843-1916) and, from a later generation, the historian Elie Halévy (1870-1937), who lectured at the school from 1898 until shortly before his death.

Lacking such direct institutional links to the ELSP, “the conservative sociologist and educator” Edmond Demolins (1852-1907), director of *La Revue de la Science Sociale*, was heavily influenced by the empirical, concrete and comparative methods of Frédéric Le Play (1806-82), who was one of the first supporters of ELSP.¹⁷⁸ The ideas of Taine and Boutmy were reflected in Demolins.¹⁷⁹ As such, his writing, testified to the circulation of ELSP ideas and interests amongst a wider French public. In *A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons* (1897), Demolins set himself the goal of explaining the success of Britain, its Empire and the USA. In so doing, he chose to concentrate on one particular aspect of British life, education, again a typical preoccupation of the ELSP. Although methodologically inferior to most ELSP work, Demolins’ book set out to be

¹⁷⁸ Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 275, and Rachel Vanneuville, “La Mise en forme savante des sciences politiques”, in *Politix*, Vol.15 no.59,(2002), 80. Terry Nichols Clark, *Prophets and Patrons: The French University and the Emergence of the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press: 1973), 104-108, described and traced the influence upon Demolins of Le Play: Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), ix stated this work to be an “application of the methods of social analysis devised by Le Play”, and 173 quoted Le Play on the central role of home to the improvement of individuals, families and societies.

¹⁷⁹ Charle, “French Intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 237, points to Taine as Demolins’ “starting point”, and 244 to his abundant references to *Notes sur l’Angleterre*. Demolins was a man of many eclectic interests, notably the role of roads in social and international interactions.

populist.¹⁸⁰ It thus succeeded in being “best-selling”, receiving a widespread circulation according to the second edition’s preface, stating that supplies of the first edition had been “exhausted within a few days”. The book thereafter ran into at least ten editions in less than two years before translation.¹⁸¹

The influence upon French perceptions of Britain of Boutmy and the ELSP was not restricted to the school itself. Boutmy found time only to lecture on English and Constitutional history from 1872 or 1874-1886.¹⁸² Between the tasks of attracting staff, setting up a library, administration, producing propaganda for the École, and the demands of his own domineering brand of micromanagement, for Boutmy “la tâche en effet est écrasante”.¹⁸³ He therefore published little until 1885.¹⁸⁴ Among the copious publications thereafter were essays comparing the British, French and American constitutions compiled in 1891, articles in the *Annales des Sciences Politiques* on the British Empire and the English language in 1899, and the book *Essai d’une Psychologie Politique du Peuple Anglais au XIXeme Siècle* (originally published 1901). Hurried along by the decline of his eyes and his health, his further full length volumes included *Eléments d’une Psychologie Politique du Peuple Américain* and *Les États-Unis et l’Impérialisme* (both 1902).¹⁸⁵ Paul Leroy-Beaulieu wrote from the 1870s across numerous subjects including finance, collectivism, depopulation and women, as well as

¹⁸⁰ See Appendix 2 for detailed commentary on the basis of *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898).

¹⁸¹ Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 275 & Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), xxxi.

However, Cornick, “Distorting Mirrors”, Cornick & Crossley, (eds), *Problems* (2000), 136-137, points to the effortful but less than wholly favourable reception that the book received from some French critics.

¹⁸² Alfred De Foville, “Notice Historique Sur La Vie Et Les Travaux d’Émile-Gaston Boutmy” in *Séances et Travaux de l’Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques*, Vol 65 (1911), 50, and J.F.V. Keiger, “Patriotism, Politics and Policy in the Foreign Ministry, 1880-1914” in Robert Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood And Nationalism In France* (London, Harper Collins Academic: 1991), 260-261.

¹⁸³ Pierre Favre, *Naissances de la Science Politique en France (1870-1914)* (Paris, Fayard: 1989), 37.

¹⁸⁴ De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 50.

¹⁸⁵ De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 52-53 (adding these last two volumes did not sell as well as their predecessor on the English, which went through several successive editions, suggesting a greater contemporary French interest in Britain than America), and Toinet, “Lawyer’s Verdict”, in Lacorne, Rupnik & Toinet, *Anti Americanism* (1990), 189-202.

demonstrating a strong commitment to colonial expansion.¹⁸⁶ His *L'Administration Locale en France et en Angleterre* (1872) aired several ideas that others, including Boutmy, were still echoing 30 years later. Halévy wrote extensively on the impact of Methodism in British history and politics, starting with two essays in the *Revue de Paris*.¹⁸⁷

Especially important because of his close interest in Britain was Jacques Bardoux (1874-1959), who had spent time at Oxford University in 1895.¹⁸⁸ A prolific commentator from a conservative Republican family, and son of Senator Agenor Bardoux, his embeddeness in the establishment is illustrated by the list of guests at his 1899 wedding which included politicians Waddington, Ribot, and President Loubet, and ELSP lecturers or supporters like Casimir Périer, P. Leroy-Beaulieu and Sorel.¹⁸⁹ Jacques Bardoux's link to the École was formalised following Boutmy's death, when "En 1908, il professe avec éclat, à l'École des Sci-Po un cours sur l'histoire de la politique étrangère du peuple anglais".¹⁹⁰ Sharing the haut-bourgeois origins of many of the Sciences-Po graduates, Bardoux came like many of them to be involved in politics at the highest level, underlining that ELSP influence was much stronger than the relatively small numbers of its pupils might suggest.¹⁹¹

Bardoux wrote regularly for the *Journal des Débats*, including from 1903 a series of articles on Britain.¹⁹² These formed the basis for his second major publication on

¹⁸⁶ Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 33, and Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 200-201.

¹⁸⁷ Reproduced as Elie Halévy, *The Birth of Methodism in England* (London, University of Chicago Press: 1971), Bernard Samuel's introduction, 2.

¹⁸⁸ Jacques Bardoux, *Memories of Oxford* (London, F.E. Robinson: 1899).

¹⁸⁹ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 49 & 51.

¹⁹⁰ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 56.

¹⁹¹ Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 16-18, Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 173 and J.F.V. Keiger, *Raymond Poincaré* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1997), 294-notably as a member of Marshal Foch's staff during the peace negotiations of 1919 and a confidant of Poincaré. See Appendix 2 for pupil numbers at the ELSP.

¹⁹² Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 55, and Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 17.

Britain, *Essai d'une Psychologie de l'Angleterre Contemporaine: Les crises belliqueuses*, (1906), which was dedicated to the editor of *Le Journal des Débats*.¹⁹³ These were followed before 1914 by *Essai d'une Psychologie de l'Angleterre Contemporaine: Les crises politiques: Protectionnisme et radicalisme*, (1907) which also contained significant amounts of material on pre-1905 affairs, *L'Angleterre radicale essai de Psychologie sociale* (1913), *Croquis d'Outre-Manche* (1914) and various other books more specifically devoted to British politicians, royalty, literature and pensions. Throughout, the impact of the ELSP was apparent. Bardoux was clearly aware of and impressed by the works of other École writers, acknowledging “le beau livre de M.Boutmy” in a discussion on English empiricism.¹⁹⁴ The “Angleterre” chapter he contributed to a volume on international Socialism was edited by Boutmy’s successor as ELSP director, and Paul’s brother, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu (1842-1912).¹⁹⁵

Sciences Po, a seat of Anglophilia in Paris?

The ELSP writers have acquired a reputation for concerning themselves extensively with British affairs, and as Anglophiles.¹⁹⁶ Part of the centre-conservative constituency identified by Crouzet as favourable to Britain and admiring of its institutions, the ELSP was held by Zeldin to be a mainstay of a renewed Anglophilia, exemplified by Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, one in a long line of Orleanists “deeply impregnated by Anglophilism”.¹⁹⁷ Osborne agreed that “the Sciences Po was founded in 1871-2 by a group of liberals, anglophile to a man, and largely Protestant in religious background”, their teaching “liberal, anglophile... in the vein of Guizot and Tocqueville”, Keiger

¹⁹³ Jacques Bardoux, *Essai d'une Psychologie de l'Angleterre Contemporaine: Les crises belliqueuses* (Paris, Félix Alcan: 1906), Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 17-18.

¹⁹⁴ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 19, see also 61 Bardoux drew on Paul Leroy-Beaulieu’s work for statistics on, and theories behind, wages and capital.

¹⁹⁵ Jacques Bardoux, “Angleterre”, in Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *Le Socialisme À l'Étranger* (Paris, Félix Alcan: 1909).

¹⁹⁶ E.g. Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 187.

¹⁹⁷ Crouzet, “communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 128-129 and Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 105 & 100-101.

adds.¹⁹⁸ Prochasson goes further in observing the “noticeable Anglomania” amongst most intellectuals that played a key role in the foundation of ELSP.¹⁹⁹ Hutton summed up Boutmy himself as “an admirer of English culture and society”, whilst Jacques Bardoux, in turn influenced by Boutmy, was a prime example (as cited by Bell) of the “favourable trends” in French opinion of Britain.²⁰⁰ Christophe Charle asserts that ELSP represented an “Anglophile current” but very much “a minority one” that had to take care to distance itself from the foreign policy of what was, at least until the Entente, a rival/antipathetic power. It was in his judgement wary of a broader, popular Anglophobia (as for example manifested in the French invasion literature studied in the previous chapter).²⁰¹

These judgments deserve further examination and, potentially, qualification. Drawing attention to the large number of foreigners attending the École by 1906, Boutmy’s eulogist might depict him as an epitome of French universalism and generous conceptions, according a place of honour “aux idées générales, aux faits internationaux, à la science universelle”.²⁰² However, if the amount of time and energy Boutmy devoted to study of the British denoted any degree of Anglophilia, this was not apparent to Austen Chamberlain, an ELSP pupil in 1885-6, to whom the directeur appeared “no great lover of the English”.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Thomas R. Osborne, “Social Science at the Sciences Po: Training the Bureaucratic Elite in the Early Third Republic” in *Historical Reflections, Reflections Historiques*, Vol 8 (1981), 52, and Keiger, “Patriotism”, in Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 260.

¹⁹⁹ Christophe Prochasson, “An English crisis in French thought? French Intellectuals confront England at the time of Fashoda and the Boer War”, in Christophe Charle, Julien Vincent & Jay Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes, Comparisons and Transfers Between English and French Intellectuals since the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2007), 257.

²⁰⁰ Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 123, and Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 15-18.

²⁰¹ Charle, “French Intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 237.

²⁰² De Foville, “Notice Historique” *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 46.

²⁰³ Sir Austen Chamberlain, *Down The Years* (London, Cassell & Company: 1935), 16. See Appendix 2 for numbers of foreigners at the ELSP.

On the face of it, the protestant flavour of the ELSP might imply anglophile leanings. Not a Protestant himself, Boutmy nevertheless had many friends who were. These included Guizot, who served as ambassador to London presiding over the first Entente Cordiale of the early 1840s, then passed the years of the Second Empire writing about British religion and history, as well as the philosophers Edmond Schérer and Ernest Naville.²⁰⁴ Protestants such as Casimir-Perier, Scheurer-Kestner, Jacques and Jules Siegfried (1836-1922) subscribed funds to the ELSP, where teaching techniques owed something to Protestant ideas of method rather than instinct.²⁰⁵ Protestant moral education influenced ELSP pedagogy: “Elle doit être théorisée afin de fournir aux maîtres et aux enfants un encadrement doctrinal et pratique”, in “Une science destinée à former des individus libres et autonomes, emplis du sens moral et capables de regarder le réel”.²⁰⁶ The practical and utilitarian bent of the Sciences Po education, chosen by Boutmy and imposed by the needs of the concours, finally, echoed the pragmatic English national character as imagined by Boutmy and others. However, Britain was not the only nearby Protestant nation with practical lessons to offer the French mind, or to give grounds for fear. Elements of that mind firstly accused French Protestants “d’affinités pro allemandes, mais ils sont repris dans les années 1880 où on représente les réformés comme les fournisseurs d’un insatiable colonialisme anglais”.²⁰⁷

A first point to bear in mind is the broader 1870s and 1880s context in which the ELSP was founded and matured, years in which Germany, and not Britain, was the country that, directly or by example, most deeply influenced French politics, changes to the

²⁰⁴ De Foville, “Notice Historique” *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 35 and Emile Levasseur, “Boutmy Et l’École” in *École Libre des Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 176. On 12 April 1882 Boutmy also married the daughter of a pastor, in the protestant church on the Rue de la Grande Armée.

²⁰⁵ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 27-28, and Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *L’Homme Protestant* (Paris, Hachette Le Temps Et Les Hommes: 1980), Chapter VII.

²⁰⁶ Garrisson-Estèbe, *L’Homme Protestant* (1980), 176 & 177.

²⁰⁷ Garrisson-Estèbe, *L’Homme Protestant* (1980), 48.

army, and social reform.²⁰⁸ The circumstances of the ELSP's birth were themselves a good example of this German influence. At the time of the Franco-Prussian war, the progenitor of the École, Émile Boutmy was, according to Pierre Favre in his survey of French Sciences Politiques, "trente cinq ans, sans fortune, professeur subalterne dans une école privé d'architecture" and "un obscur publiciste".²⁰⁹ In 1870, he resolved to fight for France, only to fall into a hole and injure his knee. Thus rendered helpless, Boutmy suffered "une année d'infinie douleur et d'humiliation sans égale mais aussi une année de crise intime".²¹⁰ News of France's defeats in the war, catalysed by enforced weeks of physical inaction imposed by the injury, prompted him in February 1871 to write to Ernest Vinet castigating "l'ignorance française derrière la folle déclaration de guerre" in 1870. 1866 had represented a triumph of German universities over Austrian, so now the key to France's success was to be found in education. Hence Boutmy conceived of his "grande oeuvre patriotique" as to found an École des Sciences Politiques in Paris.²¹¹ Initial publications on the proposed École were influenced by not only by Vinet, with Boutmy in June 1871 co-writing a piece on it, but by Taine, in *Journal des Débats* on 17 October 1871 who emphasised the need to teach the facts and statistics essential for any "idée nette ou opinion autorisée sur les affaires publiques".²¹² Taine and Boutmy concurred in feeling that "French education had been too long given over to abstractions and antiquity", and linked this to the triumph of the University of Berlin in 1870-1. This was their rationale for the importance of practical and up to date knowledge.²¹³

²⁰⁸ See especially the Mitchell trilogy *German Influence in France* (1979), *Victors and Vanquished* (1984), and *Divided Path* (1991).

²⁰⁹ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 22 & 21.

²¹⁰ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 39.

²¹¹ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 29, De Foville, "Notice Historique", *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 40, and Levasseur, "Boutmy", *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 141.

²¹² Levasseur, "Boutmy", *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 147.

²¹³ Osborne, "Social Science", *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 54.

With this background, it was not surprising that, when the ELSP opened in 1872, Vanneuville noted “une double référence à l’Allemagne... comme modèle scientifique général et comme modèle spécifique en matière d’enseignement des sciences politiques”.²¹⁴ The desire of Boutmy, Taine and others to graft onto the French education system modifications inspired by Germany was institutionalised in Le Société de l’Enseignement Supérieur from 1880.²¹⁵ So while Britain, outside of Cambridge and Oxford, had, according to one ELSP article, little to offer, “par contre, tout est à admirer en Allemagne”.²¹⁶ In acknowledging the generally negative comparisons of Britain made, it was the best that Boutmy, in 1894, could do to remark on “ce paradoxe qu’en Angleterre de bons resultants puissent être obtenus alors que les programmes sont insuffisants et incohérents”.²¹⁷ Germany therefore constituted a powerful rival model and example for those associated with Sciences Po to investigate and advocate.

ELSP – a Diversity of Views?

Despite his continuing influence over Boutmy’s intellectual life, Taine remained content to let the younger man perform the practical task of running the ELSP. A second point to consider is the extent to which Boutmy’s views, Anglophile or otherwise, infused those teaching at the ELSP. Asserting control of his own creation on its founding in 1872, Boutmy took personal responsibility for selecting, approaching and persuading or cajoling others to join the academic staff of the École. Boutmy showed exceptional perspicacity in who he “discovered”, according to Levasseur (focussing on Ribot, Sorel and Paul Leroy-Beaulieu) and De Foville, 30 years after the event still readily able to remember his own recruitment.²¹⁸ Having successfully wooed early career academics

²¹⁴ Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 69.

²¹⁵ T.Clark, *Prophets and Patrons* (1973), 28-29 & Digeon, *Crise Allemande* (1959), 370-372.

²¹⁶ Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 74.

²¹⁷ Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 75, citing preface to M Leclerc, *L’Education des classes moyennes et dirigeantes en Angleterre* (Paris, A Colin:1894), XVIII-XIX.

²¹⁸ Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 162, and De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 42-43.

with few publications or lecturers, many of them (like De Foville himself, at the Ministry of Finance) from governmental or political circles, Boutmy then offered “quelques avis bienveillants”, such as guidance on their content, tone, diction and gestures.²¹⁹ Contradicting his authoritarianism in other areas, Boutmy encouraged his staff, as relatively unestablished academic figures, to try new approaches to their subject, to study outside of their speciality, or to propagate their views outside of the École.²²⁰ His policy (consciously reflecting German practices, according to Vanneuville) was to allow “une extrême liberté de pensée et de langage” to his lecturers.²²¹ In sum:

Boutmy assistait parfois aux leçons et donnait en suite des indications sur la diction, même sur le ton et le geste qui conviennent au professeur, mais on sentait chez lui le souci...de ne pas modifier la personnalité de son disciple, de l'aider simplement à se développer suivant ses tendances naturelles.²²²

Thus, it is difficult to ascribe a single École “approach” to politics, religion or much else, beyond a blanket characterisation of Boutmy, Sorel, P.Leroy-Beaulieu and Albert Vandal as “conservative”.²²³ Taine’s manifesto for the ELSP, in laying emphasis on practical knowledge, maintained that “science engenders prudence and careful study diminishes the number of revolutionaries by diminishing the number of theoreticians”.²²⁴ However, the ELSP founders espoused not so much a strictly “conservative” agenda as one opposed to political extremes from whichever side.²²⁵ Boutmy himself has been variously interpreted as a Liberal Conservative hostile to plebiscites or democracy, “a liberal of the Orleanist tradition”, “an Anglo-Saxon style

²¹⁹ De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 44, and Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 38.

²²⁰ E.g. Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 43, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, 42, Henri Gaidoz in his ethnographic studies, and 47. ELSP funding and articles went into *L'Économiste française*, founded in 1873 by Paul Leroy-Beaulieu then edited by him until 1916.

²²¹ De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 44, and Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 75.

²²² Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 164.

²²³ Keiger, “Patriotism”, Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 260.

²²⁴ Osborne, “Social Science”, *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 56, citing *Journal Des Débats*, 17 October 1871, CF. Tint, *French Patriotism* (1964), 72.

²²⁵ Dominique Damamme, “Genèse Sociale d’une Institution Scolaire” in *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, Vol 70 (Nov. 1987), 33, citing Boutmy’s letter to Vinet, *Quelques Idées*, 25 February 1871, and *Journal Des Débats*, 17 October 1871.

Liberal”, and a proto Ronald Reagan figure, frowning upon any infringements of the state, by way of public welfare, upon individual freedom.²²⁶

From this, it was only to be expected that contradictions would arise between the lecturers of the school. Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, professor of contemporary history at ELSP from 1881, visiting Russia in 1867 and publishing three works on it in the 1880s, ultimately succeeded Boutmy as director of the École in 1906.²²⁷ His other main speciality was the study of anti-Semitism, linking it to anti-Protestantism and anti-Clericalism then deriding all three as intolerant and hateful in his “ouvrage célèbre et courageux” of 1902.²²⁸ This sat awkwardly with the overt racial undertones of Boutmy’s criticism of Americans in the same year. Analytical deconstruction of their institutions and society mixed with fulminations against “the reject scum of European society” being exported to the USA, where “only the negroes, as an inferior and spineless race, have allowed themselves to be tied to the soil”.²²⁹

The kinds of subjects treated by ELSP writers evolved over time. Initially, Boutmy denied any strictly vocational aspect to his endeavour, stating “L’École n’est à aucun degré une école professionnelle. Elle ne prépare pas à une carrière”.²³⁰ However, bringing the ELSP’s first, lean, years to an end necessitated a degree of professionalization. The emphasis moved away from science towards preparing pupils

²²⁶ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 26, Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 123, Pascal Ory, “From Baudelaire to Duhamel: An Unlikely Antipathy”, and Toinet, “Lawyer’s Verdict”, in Lacorne, Rupnik & Toinet, *Anti Americanism* (1990), 51 & 199.

²²⁷ Keiger, “Patriotism”, Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 261.

²²⁸ Pierre Birnbaum, *La France Aux Français Histoire Des Haines Nationalistes* (Paris, Seuil: 1993), 20 & 50, referring to A.Leroy-Beaulieu, *Les Doctrines de Haine l’Antisémitisme, l’Antiprotestantisme, l’Anticlericalisme* (Paris: 1902).

²²⁹ Toinet, “Lawyer’s Verdict”, Lacorne, Rupnik & Toinet, *Anti Americanism* (1990), 189, quoting Boutmy, *Elements d’une Psychologie Politique du Peuple Américain* (Paris: 1902), 127, 26 & 4.

²³⁰ Damamme, “Genèse Sociale”, *Actes Recherche*, Vol 70 (Nov. 1987), 31, citing Boutmy’s rapport of 16 July 1872.

for exams.²³¹ The story of the early ELSP amounted to “l’histoire de la mutation rapide d’une institution qui à l’origine voulait développer et diffuser une véritable science expérimentale du politique et qui devint une école professionnelle aux ambitions plus limitées”.²³² Boutmy (though briefly willing to contemplate nationalisation of the ELSP) remained committed to the private status of the ELSP.²³³ The message was not lost on Austen Chamberlain, who noted that Boutmy “and those associated with him attributed a part of France’s misfortunes in 1871 to the rigid control exercised over education by the government of the second Empire” and had therefore determined to create a private venture “where the truth could be told fearlessly, uncontrolled by the wishes or necessities of the government of the day”.²³⁴ Reflective of what ELSP writers would espouse as typically British strengths, Boutmy’s creation exemplified the virtue of “l’initiative privée, qui est hardie, active et souple”.²³⁵ Consequently, the most important of the original 200 stockholders in the school were bankers and industrialists such as Édouard André and the Siegfrieds.²³⁶ Financial support also continued from commercial figures such as Bouccicaut, no doubt encouraged by the tones in which P.Leroy-Beaulieu lauded the paternalism and community spirit of the new Bon Marché department stores and how these “are not only places of sale, they also become places of gathering: women meet each other here as formerly men did at the barbershop”.²³⁷ This commercial interest seeped into the ELSP’s teaching after 1891 when “le directeur se préoccupa de la formation de jeunes gens aptes à remplir des fonctions dans les grandes

²³¹ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 39-41 & Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 81-82.

²³² Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 21.

²³³ One attempt at nationalisation in the ELSP’s first ten years failed because the Budget commission refused to vote the government sufficient funds to buy it- De Foville, “Notice Historique”, *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 49, and Favre, *Naissances*, (1989), 48-49.

²³⁴ A. Chamberlain, *The Years* (1935), 15.

²³⁵ Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 145, quoting Boutmy’s 25 February 1871 letter to Vinet, and Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 24.

²³⁶ T. Clark, *Prophets and Patrons* (1973), 112.

²³⁷ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 38 & 46, and Michael Miller, *Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store, 1869-1920* (London, George Allen & Unwin: 1981), 229, quoting P.Leroy-Beaulieu in *L’Économiste française*, 25 December 1875.

entreprises industrielles et commerciales, banques, chemins de fer” and accordingly framed a new series of courses to meet this need.²³⁸

What did remain consistent about the École was its determination to make its teaching modern, its approach pragmatic, and a conscious, systematic creation of as comprehensive a range of contemporary courses as possible, all in one place, for example presenting a wide range of “langues vivantes” such as English, German, Russian, and Turkish.²³⁹ Perhaps more specifically linked to Britain in the imagination of Boutmy and others like him was the consistent aim of consolidating the position of a wealthy ruling elite (to match the English aristocracy). From the start, Boutmy had, apart from any pretensions to scientific positivism, aspired to “refaire une tête du peuple”, to promote “le gouvernement par les meilleurs” who would then set the tone for the rest of the French population.²⁴⁰ The ELSP would act as the instrument by which practical knowledge of how to govern effectively would be imparted to “those classes who should rule”.²⁴¹ The central aim of the ELSP was to produce “competent judges of political questions, capable of solid discussions on these and capable of leading opinion”. In practice, this resulted in very restrictive admissions to a fundamentally elitist undertaking, whose fees only the wealthy could afford.²⁴² More than ensuring the national survival of France, the ELSP served the class interest of groups, their traditional

²³⁸ Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 156. Employees from railway and other companies were able to enjoy accelerated promotion by seeking secondment to the École as pupils- Favre, *Naissances*, (1989), 48.

²³⁹ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 32 & 50. Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 145, citing Boutmy’s 1871 letter to Vinet: “Cette école devait donner un enseignement essentiellement contemporain, positif”, with a critical rather than dogmatic character and describing the 14 courses as “un ensemble logiquement lié”, & 159, and Osborne, “Social Science”, *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 55.

²⁴⁰ Levasseur, “Boutmy”, *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 145, Osborne, “Social Science”, *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 54-55, Damamme, “Genèse Sociale”, *Actes Recherche*, Vol 70 (Nov. 1987), 33-34, and Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 28 & 26, citing Boutmy’s 25 February 1871 letter to Vinet.

²⁴¹ Quoted by Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 123.

²⁴² Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 343.

privilege now threatened by Democracy, who must develop “*mérites éclatantes et utiles*” in order to invoke “*le droit de plus capable*” to maintain their leadership.²⁴³

ELSP shows of interest in Britain and a potential conceptual affinity for what Boutmy perceived as distinctively English ways should not be confused with pro-English sympathies on the part of ELSP writers. In the eyes of commentators such as Drumont or Maurras, any Protestant affiliations stood to make the ELSP subversive, such that there would have been an inherent contradiction in teaching that was “*liberal, Anglophile and patriotic by temperament*”.²⁴⁴ Thus the ELSP attitude towards Britain had to be more ambiguous than the unqualified *École* line by the 1890s favouring Slavs and national self determination in the Balkans.²⁴⁵ The level of interest in Britain did, though, increase as the immediate shock of the 1870-1 defeat faded, and this was reflected in the amount published, most of it positive if still tinged with criticism, from the mid 1880s. Likewise, once ELSP had become established as a model in its own right by 1900, the need for and usage of a German model ceased.²⁴⁶

Defining Les Anglais – a Race Apart?

Where the authors of invasion literature did not much preoccupy themselves with what made an Englishman, Frenchman or Italian, instead hanging certain characteristics on those labels as a form of shorthand, ELSP writers, following the lead of Taine, were inclined to dig deeper into notions of national character. The use of race as a tool to

²⁴³ Damamme, “*Genèse Sociale*”, *Actes Recherche*, Vol 70 (Nov 1987), 34, Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 25, plus Tint, *French Patriotism* (1964), 73 & 79, pinpointing Taine’s criticism of democracy, therefore to be limited in its impact on a government best off left “in the hands of the most able and most honest” of the elite..

²⁴⁴ Garriçon-Estèbe, *L’Homme Protestant* (1980), 48, and Keiger, “Patriotism”, Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 260. Underlinings my own.

²⁴⁵ Keiger, “Patriotism”, Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 262, and Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 32-3 & 83, covering the later implications of this for French policy towards Austria-Hungary and Turkey.

²⁴⁶ Vanneuville, “*Mise en forme*”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 86.

define peoples was common by the 1890s.²⁴⁷ For example, Paul Bourget, highlighting the essentially Anglo-Saxon nature of the USA, asserted that “Among the truest and most indestructible facts, the most fundamental is that of race”.²⁴⁸ This implied an essentialist, possibly even determinist, view of what peoples were like and might do. Given its provocative title, and proceeding from sweeping conclusions as to “Anglo-Saxon” dominance of the world, Demolins’ work might seem the most obvious example of immutable race being placed at the centre of an analysis of Britain.

The tracing of Anglo-Saxon history back to the fifth century, the insinuation of a consistent “Anglo-Saxon” mentality, particularistic, uncompromisingly independent and strongly attached to agriculture, pointed to an essentialist view of that race. Social Darwinian overtones arose in Demolins’ repeated references to “the struggle for life” and to the ideas of competition between racial groupings, such as Anglo-Saxons and Celts or Normans. These corresponded with national groupings to only a limited extent.²⁴⁹ Concepts of racial degeneration, in the form of “overworked short sighted abortions incapable of any vigorous or energetic efforts”, were happily borrowed from the Kaiser as a means of illustrating why German education should not be a model.²⁵⁰ French “only sons, spoilt and tied to their mother’s apron strings”, lost the struggle for life once they were in “competition with the more strongly nurtured offspring of large families” from abroad. Local agriculture or industry might depend on foreign workers, but at the expense of “our very nationality being submerged under the invasion of the

²⁴⁷ Martyn Cornick, “Distorting Mirrors”, Cornick & Crossley, (eds), *Problems* (2000), 133-134 and “Representations of Britain and British Colonialism in French Adventure Fiction, 1870-1914” in *French Cultural Studies*, Vol 17.2 (June 2006), 139-140.

²⁴⁸ Paul Bourget, *Outre Mer* (Paris, 1895), 420, cited by David Strauss, *Menace in the West The Rise of French Anti Americanism in Modern Times* (Connecticut, Greenwood Press: 1978), 48.

²⁴⁹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), xiv-xxii. Demolins was equally critical of “the essentially communistic system of an hereditary aristocracy” which he equated with the Normans, 161-2, and of certain elements of the Welsh or Irish working classes, also communistic, 148-9 & 172-3.

²⁵⁰ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 21.

foreigner”.²⁵¹ Reminiscent of Drumont’s works, Demolins wrote in apocalyptic terms of how the French were destined “to be ousted and crushed as completely as mere Red Indians”, whereas the Anglo-Saxons were a group “whose progress no human force can now stop”.²⁵²

Conversely, the implication of Demolins presenting English education as a model to be imitated was that the French could, by mobilising themselves, salvage their chances in “the struggle for life”. The answer was to emulate the Anglo-Saxons and adopt their practices of self-help and enterprise. Racial terminology, used by Demolins to classify and divide people into groups, became more a rhetorical device than something that truly propelled his arguments. These rested more on social mores or customs prevalent within groups defined by racial (or national) labels, in other words values that would be amenable to change, primarily through education. Indeed, race was first of the reasons expressly dismissed by Demolins for *dénatalité* in metropolitan France, given the variation in the birth rate from one region to the next, and the high reproductive rates of French settlers in Quebec.²⁵³ Instead, Demolins referred to the sedentary lifestyle and overwork in schools as one cause that “only acts on the highly educated classes” in debilitating pupils.²⁵⁴ Critical of recent French volumes highlighting the threat from Jews and speculators as works of “violent passion” lacking in “calm reason”, Demolins thus assigned a less central role to race in his analysis of “Anglo-Saxon Superiority” than might have been implied by the title of his work.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 125.

²⁵² Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 48 & xiii. Edouard Drumont, *Les Juifs Contre la France Une Nouvelle Pologone* (1899), and *La Libre Parole*, 30 September 1899, for example, argued that the French were now in a state of racial and national decline paralleled by that suffered by Poland up to and after the eighteenth century partition/disappearance of that country.

²⁵³ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 110.

²⁵⁴ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 117.

²⁵⁵ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 131.

In the ELSP as a whole, other permanent factors were held to mark the British apart, shaping their temperament and institutions. This followed from the work of Taine, whose very first proposed course “Géographie et Ethnographie” aimed to correlate soil, climate and religion to the nature of the state in any given country.²⁵⁶ In being “chiefly interested in what is called national character”, Osborne adds, “Boutmy’s work as a historian is essentially derivative from Taine”, causing him to paint “a flattering picture of the English”, and “the Anglo-Saxon tradition as one which was liberal and open, a model for France to imitate”.²⁵⁷ Boutmy’s *English People* offered a narrative of British racial development that was the conceptual parallel of *Anglo-Saxon Superiority*.²⁵⁸ However, the main themes Boutmy identified were psychological and linguistic rather than biological. More important to Boutmy was the weather leaving “deeply scored characters and hereditary marks” on the British, whose fertile soil and constant moist atmosphere forced labourers to exercise, hence an abundance of “big, vigorous, men”.²⁵⁹ An appetite for hard work was a natural result; “Les exigences du climat les obligent au mouvement. Les promesses du sol les exhortent au travail”.²⁶⁰ It was in his eyes no bad thing that in Britain “the struggle for existence” (echoing Demolins rhetoric) eliminated “the infirm, the feeble, the timid and the idle”.²⁶¹

What Boutmy observed as “the gratuitous passion of effort for the sake of effort... heedless of the result” could be a virtue when applied to work, or harmless when limited

²⁵⁶ Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 34-35.

²⁵⁷ Osborne, “Social Science”, *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 59, further to which Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 123, characterised Boutmy’s own mode of analysis as follows “From a broad spectrum of evidence such as geography, climate, demography, social structure, political institutions and intellectual life, Boutmy found the elements that pointed to the psychological key to a nation’s character and behaviour”.

²⁵⁸ Émile Boutmy, *The English People A Study of their Political Psychology* (London, T. Fisher Unwin:1904. Trans. E. English), 67 & 69-73.

²⁵⁹ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 4 & 6.

²⁶⁰ Émile Boutmy, *La langue anglaise et le génie national* (Paris, Félix Alcan: 1899), 1.

²⁶¹ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 7.

to vigorous sport.²⁶² A less happy consequence was that the British had come to colonise their near neighbours in Ireland by “conscientious massacres... subjection by barbarous laws” and degrading local language and elites.²⁶³ Englishmen, for ever “haughty and taciturn”, lacked sympathy and were disinclined to explain what they were doing, or mingle with their subjects, unlike the French relative to their “Celtic countries”.²⁶⁴ Equally unfavourable was Boutmy’s assessment of “the bestiality of the larger part of the nation” for whom unthinking “sport, betting and drinking” were the most appreciated pastimes.²⁶⁵ The dull weather that offered minimal visual stimulation formed “des hommes pratiques”, and also, paradoxically, made the British not merely monosyllabic but poets admirable for their “extrême condensation dans les idées”. The end result was work “à la fin en jets abondants et magnifiques”.²⁶⁶ British artists were notable not for reproducing their real, outer, world of fog, mist and blurred outlines, but rather vivid depictions of their own life “from within”.²⁶⁷

Similar melanges of ideas, some Anglophile and others not, emerged in the writings of other ELSP writers. Bardoux, too, dwelt on weather and geography, seeing a land where nowhere was more than 45 miles from the sea, fog hung on the hills and the people suffered a “monotonie des couleurs dans ces paysages presque aussi verts en hiver qu’en été, l’égalité de température”.²⁶⁸ The Highlands provided the most emphatic case of all: “L’Écosse, sans doute, offre de fort beaux sites, la campagne est originale, imposante même par sa solitude et sa pauvreté. Mais la tristesse qui s’en dégage est trop profonde pour moi”.²⁶⁹ In disdaining the British climate, Bardoux followed in the footsteps of not

²⁶² Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 8-9.

²⁶³ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 92-93.

²⁶⁴ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 91 & 93.

²⁶⁵ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 61.

²⁶⁶ Boutmy, *langue anglaise* (1899), 1-2 and Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 12 & 15.

²⁶⁷ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 29-30 & 37.

²⁶⁸ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 7.

²⁶⁹ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 45.

only Boutmy but Taine, who regarded it as one of the three main areas in which France was superior.²⁷⁰ Like Boutmy, Bardoux could engage in apparent racial discourse, but reference to “le Staffordshire, cette region anglo-saxonne aux têtes solides et aux esprits pratiques” as a means of distinguishing behaviour there from that in Yorkshire appears primarily to have been a rhetorical gesture.²⁷¹

Again, weather and geography served as explanatory tools. The grimness of fog, cold and urban smoke, according to Bardoux, provoked spontaneity and “souplesse de la vie” in the imagination.²⁷² British attitudes towards war shaped by their weather, comprising long periods of reserve alternating with “une combativité singulièrement dangereuse”, always sustained by “une résolution croissante, et qui ne cède jamais”, when the occasion demanded it, could make them disagreeable opponents, or potentially “a solid ally”.²⁷³ Like Boutmy, Bardoux saw both positive and negative consequences. British will power was accompanied by firmness and energy but also insensitivity. By 1906, Bardoux echoed Boutmy’s earlier conclusions in summing up his view of English character as “Extérieurement des perceptions rares, intérieurement des sentiments refoulés: telle est la définition psychologique du temperament anglais”.²⁷⁴

Elie Halévy, whilst influenced by Taineian structures, nevertheless sought to depart from the Boutmy and Demolins lines in eschewing their social Darwinist overtones.²⁷⁵ Halévy also discarded geography, Britain’s island status, as sufficient explanation for Britain’s religious and political situation, though he did acknowledge the influence of

²⁷⁰ Crouzet, “Communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 120.

²⁷¹ Bardoux, “Angleterre”, Leroy-Beaulieu, *Socialisme* (1909), 16.

²⁷² Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 14.

²⁷³ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 6 and Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 18.

²⁷⁴ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 9, CF. Boutmy, *langue anglaise* (1899), 1, arguing thanks to the British climate, “l’homme est refoulé dans le monde intérieur”.

²⁷⁵ Halévy, *Birth of Methodism* (1971), Bernard Samuel’s introduction, 15 and Charle, “French Intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 248-249.

“an oppressive and wet climate” in shaping circumstances favouring religious revivals.²⁷⁶ Boutmy’s Englishman, deprived of “habitually rich and varied sensations”, sought “refuge in the inner life...in his own consciousness”, hence a strong religiosity.²⁷⁷ Halévy went further, in judging the British “grave, reserved, silent and melancholy”, showing a religiosity even in tolerance and, in contrast to the French, none of the frivolity that enabled “the temperament of the free thinker”.²⁷⁸ An absence of state oppression, which might otherwise radicalise the religious, meant there had been no revolution to parallel that of 1789 undergone by the “Cartesian French”.²⁷⁹

Britain as a French Model and a Mirror.

For these liberal conservatives, such an absence of revolution might commend Britain as an example to be followed. Osborne affirms that ELSP writers:

tended to see in the experience of England, the model, the object lesson for their compatriots. England seemed to them to have found the optimal balance of individual freedom and social stability, national greatness and prosperity.²⁸⁰

The idea of Britain acting as some kind of model for the French to emulate (or reject) was, by the 1870s, nothing new, and could be traced back via Montesquieu, Benjamin de Constant, Charles de Montelambert and eighteenth century philosophes to at least 1688.²⁸¹ More than this, Britain functioned in the French imagination as a reflection of France and French preoccupations (the idea taken up by Crouzet’s observer).²⁸²

Whilst there can be little doubt that Britain functioned as somewhere onto which the ELSP writers could project their own criticisms of France, there were limits to the

²⁷⁶ Halévy, *Birth of Methodism* (1971), Samuel 10, & 38. Geneviève Tabouis, *Perfidious Albion, Entente Cordiale* (London, Thornton Butterworths: 1938. Trans), 5-6, cited a later writer stating more explicitly this link, for those in “their tempest ridden isle...[who] worshipped a jealous God of their own imagining, whose paradise was only open to his chosen people”.

²⁷⁷ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 21-22.

²⁷⁸ Halévy, *Birth of Methodism* (1971), Samuel 5.

²⁷⁹ Halévy, *Birth of Methodism* (1971), 34-35 & 40.

²⁸⁰ Osborne, “Social Science”, *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 57.

²⁸¹ Jeremy Jennings, “France and the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ Model: Contemporary and Historical Perspectives”, in *European Review*, Vol 14.4 (2006), 542-548.

²⁸² Crouzet, “Communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 113.

extent to which the Britain was viewed as positive model. Thus, there were limits to the Anglophilia of the ELSP writers.

Politics and Government.

As far back as 1872, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu's extended comparison of France and Britain had contended that, from the County level down, English local government was "sans régularité, sans symétrie" and hardly a "system" at all, in contrast to the French départements, consciously organised in search of the "chimère" of uniformity.²⁸³ Britain was made up of administrative units with immense variations in size and population, often hangovers from long gone historical circumstances. Governmental structure in London, "antique comme la société où elle se trouve", was no exception to these imperfections and irregularities.²⁸⁴ Yet British local government worked well, with large assemblies able to function efficiently, without tumult or long discussions unlike their French counterparts. The explanation lay in the complete contrast between "l'esprit public des deux pays", Leroy-Beaulieu going on to note that neither the mechanisms nor the cogs of government matter unless the spirit of the people was "vigoureux et sain".²⁸⁵ So his work may have been an explicit reflection upon France, but he proved much more ambivalent about taking Britain as a model to be copied, commencing with the judgment that to copy a neighbour's constitution "serait la preuve d'une étrange légèreté d'esprit et d'une singulière inexpérience".²⁸⁶ However, Leroy-Beaulieu still deemed it expedient to examine from across the Channel "des inventions heureuses qui se peuvent aisément transporter, sans troubler profondément les habitudes prises".²⁸⁷

²⁸³ Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Administration Locale en France et en Angleterre* (Paris, Guillelmo et Cie: 1872), 1-2, 85 & 88.

²⁸⁴ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Administration Locale* (1872), 3-7 & 145-146.

²⁸⁵ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Administration Locale* (1872), 60 & 42.

²⁸⁶ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Administration Locale* (1872), vii.

²⁸⁷ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L'Administration Locale* (1872), viii.

Much of what Leroy-Beaulieu had to say was echoed by Boutmy nearly 2 decades later. In his work on constitutions, also comparative, he ventured that the want of internal consistency within English Common Law “is enough to make a Frenchman shudder, possessed as he is with a spirit of love for all that is precise, exact and explicit, so passionate that it is like a French legislative instinct”.²⁸⁸ In his examination of this and the Treaties, Compacts and parliamentary Acts taken as making up the four pillars of the British constitution, Boutmy repeatedly stressed the apparent lack of logicity, and the contrast to the French approach, which consisted of “one single document, conceived all at once, promulgated on a given day, and embodying all the rights of government and all the guarantees of liberty”.²⁸⁹ In his view:

During the last 150 years a prejudice in favour of the English has grown up among the French, and is increased, I believe, by a humble minded retrospect of their own character and history. Whenever a Frenchman discusses the political system of England the words which occur to him are respect for traditions, moderation, wisdom, regular exercise of political power and legal resistance.²⁹⁰

The English law and constitution may have been a shambling, internally inconsistent series of *ad hoc* arrangements but they were durable. Boutmy placed emphasis on the flexible spirit of the constitution, which entailed a “freer and more supple law” able to accommodate “slow changes, transitions which follow and reflect the natural progress of events”.²⁹¹ Not so much stable as perpetually “in a state of motion and oscillation...its solidity comes from its pliability. It bends but does not break”.²⁹² The express contrast was made with the “inordinately explicit and scrupulously literal” French law drawn up by “logicians, engineers and artists”, as more brittle and susceptible to overthrow than the British.²⁹³ Casting the constitution as site for conflicting political forces to meet, Boutmy concluded: “a French constitution may be

²⁸⁸ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 22.

²⁸⁹ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 4.

²⁹⁰ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 37.

²⁹¹ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 170, 171.

²⁹² Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 24.

²⁹³ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 168.

likened to a town defended by a single wall without any redoubts inside it...The two Anglo-Saxon constitutions on the other hand are well provided with these internal defences”.²⁹⁴ A British constitution had the capacity to absorb changes without wholesale upheavals being necessary, whereas any breach at any one point of a French constitution would render the whole invalid, leaving the way open to revolution.

Boutmy’s analysis did not imply that the English political system could merely be transferred to French soil. For him, English laws and politics would have been impossible to replicate in France. For a start, geography had shaped the development of Britain and the USA:

The two countries in which political liberty has flourished spontaneously are both beyond the reach of the great military powers of the continent-one, thanks to its insular position, the other, thanks to its still more protected situation beyond the Atlantic.²⁹⁵

Deep rooted temperamental and intellectual differences presented a second insurmountable obstacle, inasmuch as “We cannot be struck by a turn of mind quite foreign to French ideas”.²⁹⁶ The 1689 Bill of Rights predated Voltaire and Rationalism, thus lacking their philosophical, humanitarian character. “Traditions and sources” not “Principles and axioms” gave British political life the substance as well as the appearance of institutions, in contrast to those of the 1790s and after in France.²⁹⁷ Consequently and thirdly, British laws and government could result only from a process of long drawn out, organic growth, and so cannot ever be replicated by one conscious action. In Boutmy’s words, “So the English have left the different parts of their constitution just where the wave of history had deposited them”, with no attempt at a coherent, consistent, whole.²⁹⁸ This early start to the British constitution had enabled it

²⁹⁴ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 172.

²⁹⁵ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 104.

²⁹⁶ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 38.

²⁹⁷ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 39.

²⁹⁸ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 6.

to escape “from the despotism of logic,” whereas any political system postdating the Rationalism of the Enlightenment, including those in France after 1789, could only be created with rational criteria in mind.²⁹⁹ Rousseau had in a sense opened a Pandora’s Box which meant that no country could ever set about consciously emulating the British system. Finally, echoing Leroy-Beaulieu’s public spirit argument, came the assertion:

I have pointed out, above all – and this is a warning against the snare most dangerous to Frenchman – that constitutional mechanism has no value or efficiency in itself, independently of the moral or social forces that support it or put it into motion.³⁰⁰

Elements of both writers were to be found in Bardoux, who agreed that English law was “le plus parfait exemple de l’incapacité”, a law not so much left to the interpretation of a judge but one of a series of precedents with no pretension to uniformity or logic.³⁰¹ He, however, edged the emphasis of the discourse back towards public values.

A New Set of Values: the English Gentleman

Taine’s notion of the English “gentleman”, made up of “coeur” as well as class and education, and of “l’admirable équilibre de la société et des institutions anglaises”, remained influential.³⁰² Leroy-Beaulieu, Boutmy and Bardoux saw the key to Britain’s success in the spirit of social responsibility prevalent among the upper and middle classes. This was apparent in several ways, not least a fair-minded determination to administer and enforce law free from bias of class. Leroy-Beaulieu praised the impartial justice of English JPs, buttressed by a need to take public opinion into account, remarking “Il n’y a en Angleterre aucun juge qui hésitât à condamner le plus haut fonctionnaire sur la plainte fondée du moindre des paysans”.³⁰³ The recruitment of

²⁹⁹ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 168.

³⁰⁰ Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), x.

³⁰¹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 18.

³⁰² Crouzet, “Communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 110, 112, 113 & 116, and Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 115, & 130 which suggests that Taine’s view of the English gentleman was confused and gave rise to a distorted picture of the work of gentlemen in subsequent French literature. See also Rachel Vanneville, *La Référence Anglaise à l’Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques: La Formation de Gentlemen Républicains (1871-1914)* (Université Pierre Mendès-France, unpublished Thèse pour le Doctorat: January 1999).

³⁰³ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L’Administration Locale* (1872), 59 & 60.

volunteer special policemen would be possible only “dans un pays où le respect des lois, l’énergie individuelle, le courage civique, l’habitude de manifester ouvertement ses opinions sont des qualités fort répandues”.³⁰⁴ The vision presented was essentially a paternalistic one, inasmuch as rural “riches propriétaires” manifested real “sympathie pour les populations environnantes”, who reciprocated with “un sentiment de confiance et d’adhésion”.³⁰⁵

Boutmy, on the other hand, emphasised “the fundamental individualism... rightly said to be one of the attributes of British genius”, interpreting this to mean the typically unsociable Englishman, not “conscious of the ties that bind humanity together... to a large extent a recluse... more aloof from the world in which he lives and the neighbours... than men of any other nationality”.³⁰⁶ Such temperament did not altogether preclude the notion that “the English unite for action” when necessary, but this minimised the scope for state interventions: “The English feel the vigour of their public spirit. They have experienced the vigilance of a free press and the powers of associations and of public meetings”, meaning that the authorities will “use the powers left them only with moderation and for the good of the country”.³⁰⁷

The idea of a “moral elite” especially appealed to Bardoux as a means of explaining the stable, workable, politics of Britain.³⁰⁸ Time and again during his months in Oxford, he returned to the theme of how the English “perform their social duties better than any

³⁰⁴ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L’Administration Locale* (1872), 166.

³⁰⁵ P.Leroy-Beaulieu, *L’Administration Locale* (1872), 58.

³⁰⁶ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 106 & 105.

³⁰⁷ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), 115 & Boutmy, *Constitutional Law* (1891), 25-26, 109 although not explicitly referring to Boulanger, expressed further surprise that the United States had had as many as ten ex-army men as presidents, with them all esteemed as “nothing more than honest public servants” rather than Caesars.

³⁰⁸ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 35.

other people”.³⁰⁹ Bardoux was deeply affected by speeches in the hall of New College attended by 1,000 undergraduates, remembering it as “one of the noblest sights at which I have ever been present”, ending with an exhortation to put students and working men into contact.³¹⁰ He commented:

I retired sad and touched. I thought of certain undertakings at Paris which are organised by students and supported with difficulty while no one ever gives them a word of encouragement...Moral superiority can never be recognised without a certain pang. Can it be that the passion for ideals in France is slumbering?³¹¹

Bardoux, in contrast to Boutmy, veered towards the notion of the wealthy bettering their social inferiors, something he felt was lacking in French elites. Given Oxford’s unsystematic lectures, meagrely attended by students, Bardoux re-interpreted the purpose of the university, “above all a school of political sciences”, in the following terms: “an exclusively moral and political education is given to the youth of Oxford...but the moral sense and political obligations are the two foundations of a free society”.³¹²

Whilst this was consistent with later themes of English “écoles de caractère”, to Bardoux’s mind the Oxford ethos was motivated by a preponderant concern for the “social question”.³¹³ Religiosity spurred Oxford students to civic responsibility, as witnessed in a “young Anglican priest holding a discussion on Socialism” and hoping the church will utilise “the social movement...to anticipate its dangers”, and a clergyman’s speech at “a socialistic meeting” in Somerville.³¹⁴ Fostering excursions to Oxford of London workmen, motivated by fear of a Socialism created by a “social hate”,

³⁰⁹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 72.

³¹⁰ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 29-30.

³¹¹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 32.

³¹² See for example Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 8 (a lecturer’s “slowness of speech and absence of style”), 9 (“a cold and colourless talk”), 14 (lack of detail or eloquence), 37-38 (“a certain monotony and obscurity to the lecture...No change in tone serves to wake the slumbering audience”) and 72 (“an attempt to express the idea completely rather than to pay attention to details...translates loosely, without reading the text, sometimes even without respecting the order of the words”), and 25, 106-107.

³¹³ Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 160, and Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 106.

³¹⁴ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 24, 48-49.

demonstrated that the aristocracy “have had sufficient intelligence to foresee and sympathy to understand”.³¹⁵ Equal approval went to philanthropic enterprises that he visited in London and Manchester during the summer vacation, funded by donations from students, and manned by volunteer undergraduates there to “give in exchange for their board a certain number of lectures” so as to acquaint the workmen with “intellectual and artistic joys”.³¹⁶ From this came Bardoux’s later explanations for the survivability of the British aristocracy: its ability to include a wide variety of opinions within its ranks, and the way primogeniture gave rise to numerous, relatively poor but hard working, “cadet lines”.³¹⁷

Not all aspects of Bardoux’s Oxford peers pleased him, but he retained in mind preoccupations nearer to home. Reflecting French anxieties about issues of *dénatalité*, he noted that Britain lacked “our family life with its profound bonds of union and its lofty conceptions of mother”, reacting with displeasure to his fellow students’ attitudes on this score.³¹⁸ In common with Taine, Bardoux keenly noted an outward morality. Landlords participated in surveillance of the hours kept by undergraduates, most students were too “timid” to push their luck against the discipline of the Proctor, and a student’s fiancée, rather than an opportunity for immorality, always proved “a surer guardian of his morality than the university police”.³¹⁹ According to Bardoux, the subjects invariably broached by those who met him as a French newcomer in 1895 were “When will France declare war on Germany? What is her position on the Egyptian question? And what do you think of Zola or the Latin Quarter?” the last of which seems

³¹⁵ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 70.

³¹⁶ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 109-113.

³¹⁷ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 68.

³¹⁸ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 79. French census figures in the early 1890s indicated that deaths were now exceeding births in number.

³¹⁹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 23, 66-67 & 51.

to have irritated him immensely.³²⁰ In other ways, his impressions were more in accord with other French commentators. Excessive consumption of alcohol occurred on “last day of the eights” when “numbers of students must have been brought home in wheelbarrows”.³²¹ It was with no little disgust that he later remarked on the spectacles of “the abuse of strong drink” by six students who had left behind them a soaked piano and 58 empty beer bottles (which Bardoux was presumably sufficiently fastidious to want to count).³²²

Bardoux therefore presented a favourable picture of Oxford that was nuanced as to both the inadequacy of the academic education available, and the behaviour of the students. Demolins, on the other hand, did not hold back in asserting the lessons that he drew, shifting the emphasis away from something political and communitarian towards the values of “Individualistic formation”.³²³ The key to British success, Demolins repeatedly asserted, lay in the creation of individuals able “to take care of their own welfare” animated by “a devouring spirit of initiative”.³²⁴ This had little to do with the ethos of social responsibility revered by Bardoux in Oxford.³²⁵ The nature of this self-reliance was epitomised by the school headmaster that Demolins met, described as tall, muscular, energetic, more like “a pioneer, a squatter of the Far west” than his sombre and scholarly counterparts in France.³²⁶

³²⁰ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 22 & 23. Bardoux arrived in Oxford on 30 April 1895, barely one month after Grey’s House of Commons declaration on ownership of the Nile. The works of Émile Zola had been the subject of well-known obscenity prosecutions in Britain, directed against the author’s English translator Henry Viztelly in 1888-1889- Hemmings, *Zola* (1977), 151-152, Richardson, *Zola* (1978), 160, and King, *Garden* (1978), 232-246.

³²¹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 59-61.

³²² Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 81.

³²³ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 78.

³²⁴ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 49 & 102.

³²⁵ E.g. Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 30-32.

³²⁶ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 52.

A further leading theme was agriculture, as the Anglo-Saxons had always ultimately prevailed over Celtic, Norse, or Norman rivals by a firmer “implantation of the race into the soil”.³²⁷ This pattern was now being repeated by settlers in the USA and British Empire, a progressive and overflowing civilisation transforming new territories, whereas in Algeria there lived a mere 300,000 French to 250,000 Europeans of other extractions.³²⁸ Demolins dissected “An English training college... to found in different countries those agricultural concerns by means of which the Anglo-Saxon race is gradually taking possession of the world”.³²⁹ Therefore his third preoccupation was education, being one way in which appropriate attitudes could be inculcated in France, and a field in which Britain could function as a model.³³⁰ A complete overhaul of French values was required, for “the great obstacle to reforming our schools is to be found in our social state, in our very customs and manners which urge our youth to embrace ready-made careers” in government employment.³³¹ Such reforms must be attempted, Demolins opined, and must be made to succeed because otherwise the French, still receiving the education of the past, would be doomed “to swift failure and ultimate fall”.³³²

The British Educational model(s).

Whereas wholesale constitutional or political reform on English lines remained off the ELSP agenda, it was in the field of education that Britain was seen as most promising. Two principal models emerged.

³²⁷ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority*, (1898), xiv-xxiii. The notion of the British, as well as the Prussians, being attached to the soil, at least at the level of the nobility and in contrast to the French, had already been put forward by Taine- Digeon, *Crise Allemande*, (1959), 225.

³²⁸ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority*, (1898), xxviii.

³²⁹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority*, (1898), 39.

³³⁰ See also Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 103-104, stating that, according to Demolins, *A Quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* (1897), the English system “had much to be said for it and deserved to be imitated”.

³³¹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority*, (1898), 79.

³³² Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority*, (1898), 90.

A Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons? blamed the parlous state of French education for a whole range of current ills, from *dénatalité* to a French failure to exploit their colonies properly. Overwhelming it all was France's declining international position. The ambiguous feelings entertained by Bardoux and Boutmy towards Britain tipped in Demolins' case towards angst at the preponderant Anglo-Saxon threat to France, in a fashion that called to mind Driant's antipathy rather than any Anglophilia. Demolins' work began with a map, demonstrating "the extraordinary power of expansion of that race" with vast areas of the world, including the USA and the British Empire, shaded in as "Anglo-Saxon" territory, and others, such as Egypt and Argentina, marked as "parts that are only threatened".³³³ The preface to the first French edition (reproduced in the English translation) bluntly stated of Anglo-Saxon superiority:

We all have to bear it and we all dread it; the apprehension, the suspicion and sometimes the hatred provoked by *l'anglais* proclaim the fact loudly enough. We cannot go one step in the world without coming across *l'anglais*, we cannot glance at any of our late possessions without there seeing the Union Jack.³³⁴

Germany was not the quintessential enemy, but Britain. The reason why the Anglo-Saxon should be so dominant and feared accounted for Demolins' interest in the British, and justified the creation of his book. Where Bardoux was to express the comparison between Oxford and what French education had to offer in terms that were often melancholy or envious, Demolins portrayed a more explicit "striking contrast", centred on the mission of English education designed "to form the man, the whole man".³³⁵ In this mission, to shape independent and self-relying men able to "confront and conquer the hardships which await the settler in a new country", lay the secret of Anglo-Saxon/British dominance.³³⁶

³³³ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), viii.

³³⁴ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), xxvii.

³³⁵ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 75.

³³⁶ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 45-46.

Drawing on what he had learned in Britain, Demolins stressed the independence and self-reliance engendered in school by a heavy employment of experiential and empirical methods.³³⁷ This acted as a direct mirror on French schools, according to Demolins, dedicated to the “chauffrage” (cramming) of vast amounts of knowledge, not necessarily durable, for the day of the exam, a process unavoidably entailing “skimming the surface of things rather than judiciously understanding them”.³³⁸ These exams served to secure a career in state employment: the vast number of applicants for such work necessitated harder exams, more cramming and even more emphasis in school on academic learning, at the expense of anything else. Demolins further contrasted the “sovereign contempt of the body evinced by our educational system” and “our detestable regulation gymnastics” with the “calmness and self possession” induced by British emphasis on sport and games.³³⁹ Entirely absent from the French curriculum were lessons in, and practice at, the manual trades and skills, from the construction of furniture or bridges to gardening and first aid, that would be absolutely essential to any potentially isolated colonist, thrown back on his own resources.³⁴⁰ In a critique of French attitudes, he contrasted the prevailing atmosphere in France where the highest status was accorded even by merchants or manufacturers to employment in the army, magistracy or any other state appointment.³⁴¹ This “aversion shown by the French for independent callings” meant that the young were “repeatedly told that there was nothing else respectable, nothing else worthy of their ambition” other than officialdom.³⁴² Education was a key component of Demolins’ inversion of this system of values, criticising the static nature

³³⁷ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 54-57, & 63-66, describing language, science, maths and history teaching methods.

³³⁸ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 4, 6 & 13.

³³⁹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 67, 96 & 97-the post 1870 trend for mass gymnastic exercise being an import from Germany, according to Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 408, which would have given Demolins all the more reason to reject it.

³⁴⁰ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 41-44 & 67

³⁴¹ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 83 & 134.

³⁴² Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 82 & 84.

and predictable promotion paths of such non-productive “ready-made situations”, and espousing the “dignity and freedom” of independent occupations.³⁴³

British education epitomised exactly the private enterprise that Demolins’ world view glorified.³⁴⁴ Echoing the independence of the future settlers, the school he saw was private, if supported by “men of mark”, many of them already in the colonies and able to give practical guidance on the difficulties to be overcome there.³⁴⁵ Demolins’ analysis did not overlook class, but here it served to propagate Anglo-Saxon dynamism. This practical education, and the desire to colonise, was not just for the desperate lower classes, or junior “cadet line” aristocrats driven to hard work by relative poverty, but to the sons of any and all “rich and well to do families”, happy to abandon their “calm and peaceful existence” at home.³⁴⁶ Thus, the able and wealthy were just as committed to free enterprise as any other Anglo-Saxon. Conversely, for the inevitably many Frenchmen whose exam results left them with no choice but work outside of the state, they approached that prospect half-heartedly, and were left ill-equipped by their education. “French training, excellent for the training of officials, is of no value in forming independent, resourceful men, able to cope with the difficulties of life”.³⁴⁷

To the extent that the key Anglo-French difference lay in behaviour and attitudes, Bardoux’s views in *Memories of Oxford* agreed with Demolins. The inherent self-confidence of the British was repeatedly apparent to Bardoux and, again, reflected on France, but was based more in national pride and history than the self-reliance espoused by Bardoux. Hence French institutions boasted nothing to compare with the “moral force” of Oxford, no choirs, no parks, and “none of these old palaces, the sight of which

³⁴³ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 9 & 85.

³⁴⁴ Clark, *Prophets and Patrons* (1973), 108.

³⁴⁵ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 46-47.

³⁴⁶ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 45, contrast Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 68.

³⁴⁷ Demolins, *Anglo Saxon Superiority* (1898), 85.

exalts the soul no less by their beauty than by the memories which they recall”.³⁴⁸ Bardoux reflected that “the national airs of Oxford are better than the verses of Bruant”, songs of Waterloo and Mandalay leaving him “moved and charmed: a little jealous, however, of the care their forefathers took to surround their youth with things noble and beautiful. Ours did not spoil us in the same way”.³⁴⁹ Similarly emotive language repeatedly evoked more generally the traditional atmosphere that Bardoux sensed, in the “nobility and loftiness of the architecture”, there “before my dazzled eyes”, students who “have a certain monastic stamp” and staff conducting extended ceremonies of mediaeval origin.³⁵⁰ Modernity, in the form of the election of two MPs for Oxford, prompted the remark “What a strange city is this Oxford, wherein one is continually going from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, and vice versa”.³⁵¹ What to Demolins was evidence of British self-reliance (sports such as cricket) became for Bardoux an occasion to draw comparison with “Greek athletes”.³⁵² Bardoux accepted that there was always the probability that traditions might go too far, likening the conferring of degrees to the ceremony from Molière’s *La Malade Imaginaire*, with the waspish comment “I really believe that the cultivation of these reminders of the Middle Ages has its limits and that one sometimes runs the risk of becoming ridiculous through excessive respect for them”.³⁵³ However, the prevalent tone was favourable, if not overtly romanticised.

Although the contrast with France was plain, if “an Oxford college without traces of the past would be a contradiction in terms” it followed that such a college could not simply

³⁴⁸ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 44-45.

³⁴⁹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 54.

³⁵⁰ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 6, 4 & 20.

³⁵¹ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 95 & 48.

³⁵² Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 72 & 12, echoing Taine’s likening of British sport to the ancient Olympics-Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 389.

³⁵³ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 84.

be created in France.³⁵⁴ Bardoux's educational model did not lie in a direct replication of Oxford itself, but of the consequences of the attitudes he had witnessed there. It was the concern for "the social question" that most interested him as a lesson. The poor themselves, in the form of "the herd of men and women" crowded together in the "fetid atmosphere" of a Whitechapel pub around which swarmed an "ignoble crowd of sickly children and ugly hags" excited his opprobrium.³⁵⁵ What Bardoux admired was the paternalistic desire amongst those at Oxford to improve the lot of others by philanthropic efforts, which he hoped would be emulated across the Channel.

Following Bardoux's return from Britain, he founded, and from October 1899 acted as the first secretary general of, the Fondation Universitaire de Belleville.³⁵⁶ The aim of this enterprise was similar to that of the Oxford institutions he had seen in 1895. Belleville enjoyed support from Boutmy in March 1901 at an event organised at the Sorbonne, as well as that of Daniel Halévy.³⁵⁷ It was openly admitted by Bardoux's biographer that "il n'a rien inventé: il est inspiré des University's Settlements de Londres (Toynbee Hall) des centres d'instruction créés dans les faubourgs pour l'enseignement mutuel et l'éducation sociale."³⁵⁸ Belleville also offered English language courses, among many others, and English tea at lectures, although how far it remained closely based on an English model was not clear.

Where Bardoux attempted social engineering in the form of educating the working classes, Demolins too did not limit himself to mere observation, but acted on his

³⁵⁴ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 28.

³⁵⁵ Bardoux, *Memories* (1899), 109.

³⁵⁶ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 107-108.

³⁵⁷ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 109 & 110.

³⁵⁸ Bonafé, *Bardoux* (1977), 111.

convictions in founding in 1899 his own École des Roches, in Normandy.³⁵⁹ Like the ELSP, this was a private school, directly modelled on the educational ideas Demolins had found in Britain, ideas which retained a lasting impact well into the new century.³⁶⁰

Conclusion.

It is evident that there were limits to the extent to which leading ELSP men were interested in Britain either intrinsically as a subject for study or as an object of admiration or emulation. Rather, writing about Britain more often than not enabled them to reflect upon French concerns. The writers formed a group of diverse opinions which Boutmy allowed them full rein to express, inside and outside the ELSP. Neither he nor Taine, for all their influence, had exclusive sway over ELSP attitudes. Taine's view on the superiority of education in Britain relative to France was agreed by Bardoux and Demolins who both actively imported educational ideas from Britain to train character, but did so to ends that were very different from one another.³⁶¹ Over time, the aims, interests and domestic preoccupations of these ELSP commentators evolved. There was no uniform approach. One Republican law professor complained to Boutmy of the Sciences Po staff that "I have seen the liberal elements, few in number at the start, successively replaced by reactionary elements".³⁶² This was reflected in ELSP supporters and pupils.³⁶³ Attitudes varied greatly, even within the works of individual writers. Some undoubtedly Anglophile material was published, but much of it was tempered not least by reservations about British foreign policy. In the case of Demolins,

³⁵⁹ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 406, likening it to Bedales. The school still exists – www.ecoledesroches.com Many of its web pages reiterate a Demolins dictum "Plus tôt l'adolescent sera traité en adulte, plus tôt il le deviendra".

³⁶⁰ For example, on Jerome Carcopino, education minister under the Vichy regime- Julian Jackson, *France The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2001), 156-157.

³⁶¹ Crouzet, "Communication franco-britannique", *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 120, listed the constitution, religion and education as 3 major "choses supérieures" identified in Britain by Taine.

³⁶² Keiger, "Patriotism", Tombs, (ed), *Nationhood* (1991), 260, quoting from a letter of Émile Agave, February 1879.

³⁶³ Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 31 and Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 27. The spread of Republicanism and anti clericalism in state universities, especially after 1898, continued to encourage support from conservative elements for the ELSP, with its teaching often sceptical of the Republic.

the antipathetic undertones of *A Quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* and the presumptions it made about the threatening nature of British power were hardly less extreme than those of the most far-fetched invasion literature, however admiring Demolins may have been at *how* the Anglo-Saxons had achieved their leading position.

In contrast to the popular novels studied in the previous chapter, and to much of the popular press coverage of Britain, ELSP studies on Britain tended to be consciously written for an educated audience, people who could grapple with complex trade figures or understand the abundant references to classical civilisations.³⁶⁴ Prochasson suggests that the ELSP was at the core of a movement that was inherently a minority one in a wider society that was predominantly Anglophobe.³⁶⁵

In many ways, the writings of Boutmy, Demolins, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu and (in their early forms) Bardoux and Elie Halévy, represented a culmination of long nineteenth-century trends of thought, but as French preoccupations changed over time, so did what writers looked for and perceived in Britain. With the pragmatic and the up to date always in mind, ELSP lecturers were not indifferent to the tide of current events. Shortly after Bardoux's sojourn in Oxford and the publication of *A Quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?*, the dramatic Fashoda Incident of 1898, followed by Britain's 1899-1902 war with the Boers, were bound to call into question pre-existing attitudes towards Britain.

³⁶⁴ Jacques Bardoux, *Essai d'une Psychologie de l'Angleterre Contemporaine: Les crises politiques Protectionnisme et Radicalisme* (Paris, Félix Alcan: 1907), took for granted a capacity on the part of his readers to wade through, understand and take an interest in complex figures and detailed analysis of international trade. Boutmy, *langue anglaise* (1899), 12-13, for example, directly quoted Greek in a passage comparing usage in both modern languages to that of Aristotle.

³⁶⁵ Prochasson, "An English Crisis?", Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 257.

3: Fashoda, the Boer War and their place in Future War Literature, Sciences Politiques and French postcards.

Introduction.

Having examined some of the context of French attitudes towards Britain, this chapter will consider the particular events of 1898-1902 as a preliminary to assessing how they interacted with those attitudes, and the nature of the response to them at the French Foreign Office, in the Paris Press, and among those French in, or travelling to South Africa in the relevant period.

The Fashoda Crisis, 1898.

The roots of the crisis lay in colonial rivalries in Egypt, still nominally a part of the Ottoman Empire. France had historically enjoyed special links with Egypt dating back to Napoleon's Nile Expedition of 1798 and to the 1840s. European involvement in Egypt increased throughout the century, marked most clearly by the opening of the Suez Canal in November 1869. Designed by a Frenchman, de Lesseps, and obstructed by British diplomats, once completed the Canal was most used by British traffic as highway to their far eastern colonies, its control the object of intrigue on the part of the British government.³⁶⁶ Persistent financial problems on the part of successive Egyptian Khedives enabled Disraeli to acquire a 40% share in the canal in 1875, complementing the already considerable role of Anglo-French banks in lending the Khedive money. Indigenous resentment against foreign involvement in Egypt erupted in 1881-2 into a Nationalist revolt in the Egyptian army, and riots directed against European expatriates.³⁶⁷ When the British raised the possibility of a joint intervention in Egypt to protect their nationals, Freycinet proved unable to persuade the Chambers to vote the

³⁶⁶ Robin Neillands, *The Dervish Wars. Gordon and Kitchener in the Sudan* (London, John Murray: 1996), 3-5, 11-12 on British efforts to stop the canal before 1869, and 19 stating that 324 out of 489 ships using the canal in 1870 were British.

³⁶⁷ Neillands, *Dervish Wars* (1996), chapter 4, and 18, stating that in 1880 there were over 60,000 Europeans residing in Alexandria and Cairo.

necessary credits for French participation in an initial encroachment into Egyptian territory.³⁶⁸ Having moved into Tunisia only the previous year, the French had enough to deal with there, and elsewhere.³⁶⁹ Britain was thus left to act alone, landing troops and defeating the Egyptians in September 1882. The hopes of the Republic subsequently rested on the ostensible nature of British occupation, supposedly a temporary one designed to protect European nationals, and then to secure the province itself from the influence of the radical Islamic regime of the Mahdi, to the south. In reality, the British came to see retention of Egypt as a crucial safeguard for their route to India. Given British incursions into East Africa, these strategic considerations were reinforced by the idea of linking British colonies by constructing a railway to run from Cairo to the Cape of Good Hope.

By the early 1890s, there was little sign that any British administration, Conservative or Liberal, was inclined voluntarily to vacate Egypt. The position of the Liberals, asserting British monopoly over the upper Nile against incursion from any other European power, was most notably declared by Grey in response to a parliamentary question on 28 March 1895.³⁷⁰ Conservative adherence to this policy was affirmed by a more forthright, if less well publicised, warning from Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary Lord Salisbury in December 1897.³⁷¹ Pressure from French colonialists within and outside of the Quai

³⁶⁸ Patricia Wright, *Conflict on the Nile the Fashoda Incident of 1898* (London, Heinemann: 1972), 24-25, and P.J.V. Rollo, *Entente Cordiale the Origins and Negotiations of the Anglo-French Agreements of 8 April 1904* (London, Macmillan & Co: 1969), 15, 18-19 & 41-42.

³⁶⁹ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 20, and Neillands, *Dervish Wars* (1996), 40.

³⁷⁰ *The Parliamentary Debates, Hansard*, Fourth series Vol 32, Columns 403-406, Darrell Bates, *The Fashoda Incident of 1898* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1984), 22-24, Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 55 and Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 62; Andrew J.P. Taylor, "The Prelude to Fashoda, the Question of the Upper Nile, 1894-5", in *English Historical Review*, Vol 65 (January 1950), 52-80, provided details of Anglo-French moves providing the context for Grey's declaration.

³⁷¹ J.F.V. Keiger, "Omdurman, Fashoda And Franco-British Relations", in Edward Spiers, (ed) *Sudan The Reconquest Reappraised* (London, Frank Cass Publishers: 1998), 164, and James Ashley Soames Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London, Athlone Press: 1964), 113, and David Levering Lewis, *The Race to Fashoda* (London, Bloomsbury: 1988), 194. Roger Glenn Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered: The Impact of Domestic Politics on French Policy in Africa 1893-1898* (London, John Hopkins University Press: 1970), 34-5, draws attention to the public nature of

d'Orsay impelled more action in response to these stands than diplomatic protests. In the hope of forcing the British to discuss the issue of Egypt, three expeditions were contemplated, for a launch east from the French Congo to the Nile. The first two having been diverted, the third under Commandant Jean-Baptiste Marchand set off from France in June 1896 with orders to occupy Fashoda, an abandoned fort on the upper reaches of the Nile in Sudan.³⁷² A subordinate and more distant objective was to frustrate British north/south railway construction, “couper la fameuse ligne anglaise du Caire au Cap par une ligne française de Loango à Djibouti”, by instead linking France’s West African colonies to their single enclave in the east, Djibouti.³⁷³

How the Marchand Mission was set up reflected a lack of co-ordination at the top of French government, and the extent to which determined pressure groups could decide policy.³⁷⁴ Such a group was the Parti Colonial, a loose band of deputies and administrators who sought to promote French Colonial expansion, and dominated the Ministry of Colonies. The only written authorisation for Marchand from the Quai d'Orsay was the fruit of a cabinet reshuffle at the end of October 1895. This brought the professional chemist Marcelin Berthelot to office, together with a new Minister of Colonies, the Egyptologist Guyiesse. This “pair of inexperienced left wing academics” fell easy prey to a redrafted proposal for the Mission, its objects now defined as the effective occupation of territory already acquired by France and the occupation of further lands to the west bank of the Nile with the consent of the local inhabitants, and its nature as devoid of “any military character and appearance”. Persuaded that the risk of any conflict was minimal, “a confused and incompetent Berthelot” gave his consent

the Grey declaration whereas Salisbury’s December 1897 warning, delivered in private via the British Embassy, represented a reversion to a more traditional style of toned down diplomacy.

³⁷² Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), chapters 4, 5, 7 & 8.

³⁷³ *Le Gaulois*, 29 September 1898.

³⁷⁴ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 137-139.

on 30 November 1895 to this “visit by a group of anonymous European travellers without a national flag or government instructions”.³⁷⁵

After some two years of arduous travel from the coast, Marchand’s expedition reached its objective on 10 July 1898. Attacks on Fashoda from Dervish gunboats were repelled on 25 August.³⁷⁶ Such were the communications of the time that Marchand remained unaware of preparations for Anglo-Egyptian forces to move south, likewise their defeat of the Mahdi’s successor at Omdurman on 2 September.³⁷⁷ Equally, Kitchener’s forces, although not unconscious of the possible presence of Marchand in the general area, had no means of being sure whether the European force reported in Khartoum to be at Fashoda was French or British.³⁷⁸ Moving south along the Nile, Kitchener met Marchand at Fashoda on 19 September 1898. Neither man on the ground would concede control of the fort to the other, leaving resolution of the dispute to Paris and London. A stand off between the French and an Anglo-Egyptian contingent, encamped beside Fashoda, ensued.

Direct communication between the Marchand mission and the outside world was blocked by Kitchener, whose telegram first disclosed its whereabouts.³⁷⁹ Word of Marchand’s arrival at Fashoda reached French Foreign Minister Delcassé via the British

³⁷⁵ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 135, and 41-44 & 52, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 30-1, see also Hillas Smith, *The Unknown Frenchman The Story of Marchand and Fashoda* (Lewes, Book Guild Ltd: 2001), 58-59.

³⁷⁶ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 166-168, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 113, 117-119, Lewis, *Race to Fashoda* (1988), 221 and Smith, *Unknown Frenchman* (2001), 97-98.

³⁷⁷ *Le Temps*, 30 September 1898 and Keiger, “Franco-British Relations”, Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 167, Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 165 & 170, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 72 on communications generally, 72, 94 & 124 on Marchand’s state of knowledge at the end of 1897, in May 1898, and on the eve of Kitchener’s arrival at Fashoda, and 83 on the imprecise intelligence about Marchand reaching Kitchener in January 1898.

³⁷⁸ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 121-2, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 128, and Lewis, *Race to Fashoda* (1988), 216. A British mission, sent north to Fashoda from Uganda in June 1897, had been thwarted by a mutiny.

³⁷⁹ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 185, Bates *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 135-141 & Smith, *Unknown Frenchman* (2001), 115-116.

government on 26 September, so breaking the crisis. Once it had been confirmed to London that Marchand had the authority of Paris behind him, the next six weeks were marked by stiffening British demands for an unconditional withdrawal of his mission, before any negotiations could be contemplated. As this would mean no alteration of the status of Egypt, let alone other concessions, the main object of the Marchand expedition would be defeated by French acceptance of this demand. Awaiting first hand reports from Marchand's subordinate Baratier, France maintained that, by virtue of the Egyptian evacuation of the Sudan in the mid 1880s, the territory had become *Res Nullius* and that, under international convention, ownership belonged to the first power effectively to occupy the ground.³⁸⁰ However, even in the event of a withdrawal being contemplated, British resolve not to enter negotiations before the recall was confirmed in cabinet on 27 October. Without support from any third nation, crippled by cabinet instability and internal unrest, and confronted with a preponderance of British naval power, the Quai d'Orsay had ultimately little choice but to give way despite the lack of any other British concessions.

Salisbury's public announcement of the withdrawal, on 4 November, effectively ended the crisis although the threat of war lingered for several weeks. Marchand, choosing the tougher option to continue east via Abyssinia to Djibouti rather than steam in comfort north up the Nile in a British gunboat, maintained his mission in Fashoda until mid December. Once tempers over Fashoda had subsided in the new year, an agreement was concluded on 21 March 1899, delineating the extent of British and French possessions in central Africa, tied to the settlement of other, smaller, difficulties between the two European powers in West Africa.³⁸¹ As Patricia Wright put it, "The Fashoda crisis

³⁸⁰ For example, see the arguments of *Gaulois*, 17 October and *Matin*, 14 September 1898.

³⁸¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 114, Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 209, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 178-181 & Lewis, *Race to Fashoda* (1988), 229.

lanced the festering boil poisoning Anglo-French relations, although this was not apparent at the time or for some time afterwards”.³⁸² In the meantime, another conflict involving British Imperial ambitions, this time in southern Africa, was escalating.

The Course of the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902.

There had long been confrontation between those, mostly of Dutch descent, who had settled in South Africa in the years directly after 1652, and the British, who established in the 1790s an official and military presence in the Cape subsequently ratified by the peace treaties of 1814-5. The nineteenth century was marked by a series of conflicts functioning on a triangular basis between the British, the Boer settlers, and the various indigenous black tribes in South Africa. Boer settlement and resistance by the middle of the century centred on the two inland areas, Transvaal and the Orange Free State, although some Boers remained in the more coastal areas where British dominance came to be asserted most forcefully. These formed the colonies of the Cape and Natal which were formally part of the British Empire. Disputes over the extent and nature of British control over the two Boer Republics had led to war in 1880-1, followed by the Anglo-Boer conventions of 1881, which cited “British Suzerainty” over Transvaal, and 1884 which did not, and allowed greater practical independence.³⁸³

The region had already been to some extent destabilised by the 1870s discovery of a rich diamond seam at Kimberley, on the border between Cape Colony and Orange Free State, giving rise to a boom that transformed the area’s economy.³⁸⁴ A further discovery, of gold in the Transvaal, gave rise to a massive influx from 1886-7 into Johannesburg of foreigners, mostly British, to exploit the gold reserves.³⁸⁵ Further heightening the

³⁸² Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 212, CF. Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 182.

³⁸³ The independence of Orange Free State had been recognised in 1854 by the Bloemfontein convention, and by an order in Council- Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, Sphere Books: 1991), 17 & 40, and Byron Farwell, *The Great Boer War* (Ware, Wordsworth Editions: 1999), 10 & 30.

³⁸⁴ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), xxii & 18.

³⁸⁵ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 20-1 and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 21-2.

tension, the 1890 occupation, by the British Chartered Company, of Rhodesia to the Transvaal's north left the Boer Republics as an enclave entirely surrounded by British territory, save to the north east, where the Portuguese colony of Mozambique gave access to the sea via the port of Laurenço-Marquês.³⁸⁶ An incursion from Company territory into Transvaal by Dr Jameson on 29 December 1895 failed to secure control of the Republic. In view of the regular army officers and the 500 Chartered Company police accompanying Jameson and the backing of Cecil Rhodes for the attempted coup, this greatly embarrassed the British, but its failure did nothing to diminish interest in the Transvaal or its gold. Citing the Boers' reluctance to grant civic or political rights to the foreigners, or "Uitlanders", by the late 1890s numerically dominant in parts of the Transvaal, the Colonial Office in London pressed the Transvaal with various and successive complaints. Centring on the Transvaal's attempts to control immigration in the form of the Alien's Bill, these had nearly led to war in April-May 1897, with President Paul Kruger then backing down. Subsequent demands centred on issues of Uitlander naturalisation and the franchise, which were the subject of an unsuccessful conference at Bloemfontein in June 1899.³⁸⁷ Further pressure from London, encouraged and assisted by the High Commissioner for the Cape, Alfred Milner, culminated in Kruger declaring a refusal to compromise the Transvaal's independence and rallying the smaller, less populous, Orange Free State to mobilise on 27 September, then starting the war against Britain on the expiry of a 48 hour ultimatum on 12 October 1899.

Its military operations thus confined to Southern Africa, the war in essence broke down into three phases. Whereas Britain would take several weeks to summon and despatch troops from its Empire, and supplies from there and elsewhere, to South Africa, the Boers enjoyed the initial advantage of a quick mobilisation and ability to take the

³⁸⁶ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), xxii.

³⁸⁷ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), chapter 6 and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 33-5.

offensive. Overrunning other border towns in the Cape, they surrounded British garrisons in Kimberley, Ladysmith and Mafeking. The British had to wait until November before sufficient resources were on the ground to contemplate any offensive operations. However, they failed either to score a success against the Boers in open battle or to relieve the besieged towns. Advances in three columns, led by Lord Methuen to the west towards Kimberley and Mafeking, Omdurman veteran Gatacre in the centre, and Commander-in-Chief Buller in the east aiming for Ladysmith, resulted in defeats with heavy losses, respectively, at Magersfontein, Stormberg, and Colenso from 10-15 December 1899. The new year saw no immediate improvement on this “Black Week”, with further humiliation awaiting Buller on 24 January 1900 when another attempt to relieve Ladysmith was bloodily halted by the Boers at Spion Kop.

The second phase of the war was heralded by the arrival of further British reinforcements and a new Commander in Chief, Lord Roberts, with Kitchener as his Chief of Staff. The run of major British defeats that had characterised the first phase came to an end with the destruction of Kronje’s Boer force at Paardeburg across 17-27 February. Roberts followed this up by advancing to Orange capital Bloemfontein on 13 March, although disease, supply problems and continued Boer resistance slowed further progress. It took until 31 May-5 June to reach Johannesburg, then Pretoria. The Boer armies in the field were not definitively beaten until after the last set piece battle of any size, at Bergendal on 27 August.³⁸⁸ With the flight of Kruger from Komatipoort into Mozambique, and the arrival of the British at this border town on 24 September 1900, many people assumed that the war was “practically over”.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 455-5 and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 308-10.

³⁸⁹ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), chapter 35.

The hopelessness thereafter of confronting the British on a large scale, in a traditional battle, did not deter the Boers from continuing a guerrilla resistance. A third phase therefore went on for a further period of nearly two years, characterised by small scale Boer attacks, at times and in places of their own choosing. Mao Tse-tung later wrote that a guerrilla moves through the people like a fish moves through water; Kitchener, showing the same unflinching determination as in his two-year Sudan campaign, took the decision in 1900 to remove that water.³⁹⁰ So this period of guerrilla war was eventually marked by the systematic and exhaustive clearance of the former Republics' countryside, being stripped of either the people-rounded up into concentration camps-or the food, animals and other resources upon which the remaining Boer commandos relied. Thanks to their mobility, many of these remained not only at liberty, but able, in small scale skirmish actions, to inflict embarrassing defeats on the larger British forces sent to hunt them down. Despite the persisting willingness of some Boer "Bitter enders" to carry on the fight, exhaustion drove a majority of Boer leaders finally to sign peace at Vereeniging on 31 May 1902.

Fashoda and the Boer War in France.

Although no European power had seriously contested British possession of the Cape after 1815, the discovery of diamonds and gold naturally attracted to the area workers and the money of investors from across Europe, including France.³⁹¹ This sufficed to bring South Africa to fairly widespread attention even before tensions began to mount in the mid-1890s. When war broke out, the popular response across Europe, as Britain's

³⁹⁰ Tabitha Jackson, *The Boer War* (London, Channel 4 books: 1999), 148, CF. Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 350.

³⁹¹ Michel Maubrey, "Les Français et le 'Veau d'or': La Question Sud-Africaine (1896-1902)", in Daniel Bach (ed), *La France et L'Afrique du Sud Histoires, Mythes, et Enjeux Contemporains* (Nairobi, Karthala: 1990), 50-58.

diplomatic representatives were not slow to relay back to London, was almost entirely hostile towards the British position.³⁹² Harold Nicholson later recalled:

the burst of hostility aroused against us on the continent by the Boer War: there always occur moments when the British public realise with amazement that their country is not invariably, inevitably, naturally and universally beloved abroad. Such a moment occurred when we declared war on the Boer Republics. Our initial defeats were greeted with a general howl of Schadenfreude from Rotterdam to Memel, from Vigo to Irkutsk.³⁹³

Where Fashoda had been an Anglo-French conflict, a year later sections of the French populace were able to join others across Europe to take up the Boers' cause as their own. According to Robbins, there was "no lack of abuse directed at individual British people abroad" across all of Europe.³⁹⁴ On a mundane level, anecdotal evidence suggests that British visitors to France faced low level harassment. British tourists arriving at Newhaven in 1899 quickly noted the changed atmosphere at customs, and shopkeepers who, "while generally prudent enough to stay on the safe side of actual rudeness, did not forbid their children to call out 'Goddamn' at the passing British".³⁹⁵ Even long standing provincial British expatriates in Dieppe, who could have had no part in the war, suffered, with minor harassments in the form of "a good deal of abuse and occasional stone throwing" and a girl having her feet trodden on.³⁹⁶ Local councils in Paris, Rennes and Vannes openly voted sympathy and resolutions in favour of the Boers.³⁹⁷ At the 1900 Paris Exposition, the Boer Farmhouse was, reportedly, among the most popular exhibits, and, more generally, sympathy for the Boers found its expression in the wearing of felt hats "à la Boer", with the St Cyr trainee officers' 1900 cohort dubbed the

³⁹² See for example the despatches in G.P. Gooch and Harold Temperley (eds), *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, Vol 1, (London, HMSO: 1927. hereafter *BDW*, 1), chapter VII.

³⁹³ Harold Nicholson, "The Origins and Development of the Anglo-French Entente", in *International Affairs*, (Royal Institute Of International Affairs), Vol 30.4 (October 1954), 408-9.

³⁹⁴ Keith Robbins, *Britain and Europe 1789-2005* (London, Hodder & Arnold: 2005), 174.

³⁹⁵ Simona Pakenham, *Sixty Miles From England: The English at Dieppe, 1814-1914* (London, Macmillan: 1967), 183.

³⁹⁶ Pakenham, *Dieppe* (1967), 184, quoting Walter Samborne, writing on 8 March 1900.

³⁹⁷ Prochasson, "An English Crisis?", Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 265.

“Transvaal year”.³⁹⁸ American visitors to the Expo in summer 1900, conscious of the resemblance to French ears of their language to that of the British, “took to wearing in their lapels or on their dresses enamel pins that bore, unmistakably, the stars and stripes”.³⁹⁹

By contrast, the stance of European governments, even those claiming the closest kinship to the Boers, was more reserved. Kaiser Wilhelm II had, after the Jameson Raid in January 1896, not shied away from an open show of support for Kruger by sending him a congratulatory telegram. Nearly four years later, faced with British official involvement in an international war, German policy was more cautious. However sympathetic to the Republics might be the noises coming from Berlin, Paris and Amsterdam, in practice neither these governments nor any of the other European powers proved willing to depart from a policy of official neutrality, despite the best efforts of the Boer representative in Europe, Dr Leyds, or the upswell of pro-Boer public sentiment which could never be entirely contained.

Invasion Literature-an Amplified Message.

An upsurge of invasion literature, such as *La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe* and Eugène Demolder’s *L’Agonie d’Albion* (1901), was brought on by the Boer War and Fashoda. These events fed off the history invoked by *Plus d’Angleterre* and Driant’s *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (as well as nationalist rhetoric more widely) as a means of constructing an idealised, aggrieved, nationalist France, as well as that country’s distinction from the perfidious, brutal British. Both based their books on a particular reading of history, which depicted Britain as “la Carthage moderne”, the British, Driant

³⁹⁸ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 136, William Fortescue, *The Third Republic in France 1870-1940* (London, Routledge: 2000), 72, Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 163/“How the Entente Cordiale Began”, in Richard Mayne, Douglas Johnson & Robert Tombs, (eds), *Cross Channel Currents 100 Years of the Entente Cordiale* (London, Routledge: 2004), 4-5, and Tombs, *Sweet Enemy*, (2006), 426.

³⁹⁹ Robert J. Young, *Marketing Marianne: French Propaganda in America 1900-1940* (London, Rutgers University Press: 2004), 5.

asserted, “un peuple de marchands” who rely on mercenary troops and bluff to bring them success.⁴⁰⁰ Despite some allusions to previous Roman and Norman invasions in the context of the topography occupied by the invaders, *Plus* had generally kept to the history of the last 100 years, whereas Driant, though not neglecting Napoleon, went back much further.⁴⁰¹ Joan of Arc remained a motive for invading, as did humiliations executed in the name of Henri VI, as much as British executions, rapes and fires in Ireland in 1798.⁴⁰²

Recent events in Sudan and South Africa built on the sentiments arising from Driant’s reading of previous history: “La guerre contre l’Angleterre était décidément, dans notre grand part militaire, la guerre populaire, depuis Fachoda surtout”.⁴⁰³ The years 1898-1902 gave some scope for Driant to develop his line of thought further, notably supplying evidence of a duplicitous British master plan for aggrandisement at the expense of France. It falls to Petitet, as Driant’s hero in the Diplomatic Corps to clarify the larger picture by reporting that “l’Egypte, Fachoda, le Transvaal sont les étapes de cette marche orientée vers le continent africain et pendant qu’elle s’y adjugeait les territoires les plus fertiles, Lord Salisbury nous laissent généreusement en partage les déserts sahariens”.⁴⁰⁴ Contradictorily, Driant’s interpretation of the Boers as having taught Britain “un leçon d’honneur et de patriotisme” and exposed British weakness led him to conclude that it was more, not less, likely that those ambitions would be pursued by war.⁴⁰⁵

Déchue de son omnipotence d’autrefois, couvant une rage indicible depuis ses inoubliables défaillances du Transvaal, elle cherche, depuis la paix bâtarde

⁴⁰⁰ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 7 and Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 138, 409, Vol 3, 74, 233 & 338.

⁴⁰¹ Anon, *Plus* (1887), 80 & 99 and Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 156, 169. Cornick, “Representations”, *French Cultural Studies*, Vol 17.2 (2006), 148, points, however, to the centrality of Napoleon and his 1803-04 invasion projects in Driant’s work.

⁴⁰² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 62, 206 & 44.

⁴⁰³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 351-2.

⁴⁰⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 127.

⁴⁰⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 48.

qu'elle a conclue là-bas, un peuple à attaquer, une marine à détruire... De là ses provocations, ses insolences, comme à l'époque de Fachoda, avec cette différence qu'à Fachoda elle bluffait et n'avait pas envie de se battre, tandis qu'aujourd'hui elle le veut de toute sa colère, pour se refaire une réputation de puissance militaire et masquer par des victoires la lamentable faiblesse de son armée dans l'Afrique de sud.⁴⁰⁶

Fears that, on the successful conclusion of the war, British forces might be turned against France were not limited to the nationalist right. Paul Cambon anticipated fresh, intolerable provocations to quarrel once Britain had had a year to recover after winning the war, whilst Elie Halévy wrote that the British would seek war for no specific goal but "as an energetic way to assert to others, and to themselves, that they do exist".⁴⁰⁷

The Boer War's most novel contribution to Driant's thought on Britain lay in how it impacted upon his evaluation of British military abilities. Centrally, he repeatedly asserted British military incapacity in South Africa.⁴⁰⁸ This drove the plot of *La Guerre Fatale* in the direction that Driant wanted, in making it more plausible, once French troops had landed in Britain, for them easily to progress. As Clarke rightly observes, "British troops prove to be as second rate and incompetent as any enemy general could hope... The fortunate invaders find that 'the worst faults of Lord Methuen and Sir Redwers Bulwer in the Transvaal' have been repeated on their home ground".⁴⁰⁹ The competence of senior British officers was naturally challenged, for example a Commander-in-Chief who (in autumn 1900) had declared the Boer war was over when it was not.⁴¹⁰ Driant's contempt went beyond them to encompass Britain's part-time

⁴⁰⁶ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 10.

⁴⁰⁷ Paul Cambon, *Correspondance 1870-1924*, tome 2, (Paris, Bernard Grasset, 1940), 46, Paul Cambon to Jules Cambon, 20 February 1900 and François Crouzet, "Elie Halévy and Anglo-French Relations, 1898-1905", in Philippe Chassaing & Michael Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations 1898-1998 from Fashoda to Jospin* (Basingstoke, Palgrave: 2002), 74, quoting a letter written by Halevy to his father on 25 October 1899. For wider context to these fears, see Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 116.

⁴⁰⁸ Cornick, "Representations", *French Cultural Studies*, Vol 17.2 (2006), 149-150.

⁴⁰⁹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 108.

⁴¹⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 306.

volunteers, in the recollection of the repeated failures of some Yeomen, and of others that:

Lord Kitchener renvoyait au bout de quinze jours les pitoyables « yeomen » expédiés de la métropole, avait essayer de lever à prix d'or les mercenaires chez les peuples à temperament guerrier. Quelle fêlure cette pauvreté de soldats... On peut dire que cette guerre de Transvaal avait été pour l'Angleterre le commencement de la fin.⁴¹¹

The army as a whole, including all of the cavalry, had been only too ready to surrender rather than fight.⁴¹² This in turn was related to one of the major themes in Driant's treatment of the British army, linked to the idea of Britain as Carthage, their soldiers motivated to join up only by thought of their own economic gain. Officers and NCOs know and take advantage of this motivation to fill the ranks of "Cette armée, composée de rebuts de la population enrolés à six et neuf francs par jour par des sergents recruteurs, chacun savait ce qu'elle valait".⁴¹³ Even when British efforts had been crowned with success, Driant inclined to question their real value, citing Kitchener's "massacre des Madhistes à Omdurman" and Roberts' dubious South African victories when his forces enjoyed a 10:1 preponderance, and scoffing at the financial awards made by parliament to both by way of reward.⁴¹⁴

For the most part, therefore, Fashoda and the Boer War simply provided a fresh opportunity to air what Driant would have been saying anyway. It was no coincidence that the general attacking Driant's Tunisia was Brabant, who had previously "illustré au Transvaal des exécutions sans nombre, des incendies des fermes et des déportations de femmes et d'enfants dans les laagers des reconcentrados".⁴¹⁵ Such British treatment of

⁴¹¹ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 286 & Vol 2, 342.

⁴¹² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 283.

⁴¹³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 214.

⁴¹⁴ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 409, Vol 3, 126 & 391-2, adding that British parliament and educators had grossly exaggerated the contribution of British forces in the suppression of the Boxer rebellion and at Inkerman in the Crimean War, and unduly lauded them at the expense of their (French) allies.

⁴¹⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 237.

Boer civilians subsequently excited abuse as being an easy tactic to practice, “car le tigre, le chacal, le vautour et toutes les bêtes les moins sympathiques de la création la possèdent naturellement”.⁴¹⁶ Driant placed French values, epitomised by “les nobles émotions” of Dhurr when first an officer, in explicit contrast to destroying a race in South Africa, and Britain’s real aim, the making of money.⁴¹⁷ As well as demonstrating British brutality, the camps also furnished fresh evidence of British egoism, greed and hypocrisy:

Sa démocratie froidement indifférente à tout qui ce n’était pas son intérêt et son bien être, n’avait plus d’idéal. Lord Kitchener pourrait sans soulever les cris d’horreur des sensibles ladies et des scrupuleux clergymen faire mourir 11,000 enfants en six mois dans ses camps de reconcentration parce que le peuple anglais tout entier avait le regard hypnotisé sur les mines d’or.⁴¹⁸

Finally, there was the point that, in terms of its plot and outcome, *La Guerre Fatale* was not so very different from *Plus d’Angleterre*, produced long before the Boer War or Fashoda. As such, Driant’s effort paralleled the less well-known work by Alphonse Allais, *Projet d’Attitude Inamicale vis-à-vis L’Angleterre* (1900), which largely re-ran the fantastical plot of *Mort Aux Anglais* of eight years previously.⁴¹⁹ Indeed, the evidence of Driant’s subsequent publishing career suggests that not even the advent of the Entente Cordiale was enough to dissuade him from propounding continued Anglophobic sentiments.⁴²⁰

French Postcards: New Medium, New Ideas?

Whilst the existing genre of invasion literature might have drawn little that was new from events in Africa, at the time of the Boer War another popular medium was emerging in France, in the form of postcards. Relative to other countries, notably Germany and Austria-Hungary, the postcard had come late to France, not officially born

⁴¹⁶ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 359.

⁴¹⁷ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 14.

⁴¹⁸ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 73.

⁴¹⁹ Clarke, “Future War”, *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 409.

⁴²⁰ For details of this, see Appendix 1 - Whither Invasion Literature.

until 1873, with none commercially available until the 1889 Exposition.⁴²¹ The Dreyfus affair widened the popularity and reception of cards, in part used as a means of articulating the opposing viewpoints.⁴²² The period 1898-1902 was therefore one of rapid development for the card industry, a first card collecting club founded in 1899 blossoming to seven by 1901.⁴²³ The 1900 Exposition furnished a further stimulus.⁴²⁴ It is some indication of the reach of postcards that the French are estimated to have sent 60 million of them in 1902, although this number was still dwarfed by the corresponding German and British figures, and the postcard had during the Boer War yet to attain the peak of circulation, and therefore currency as propaganda, to be reached in World War I.⁴²⁵ In the opening months of the Boer war, shops were already so “full of scurrilous postcards” that the British Consul at Le Havre felt moved to send a selection back to the Foreign office, together with leaflets designed for schools, featuring “the brave, primitively armed Boers routing the hideous red coated soldiers of Britannia”.⁴²⁶ By 1902, the postcard had evidently achieved a sufficiently broad reception to indicate something of popular attitudes towards the war.

Some cards served to fill an imaginative gap between the written press and what might otherwise have been ill-informed and unrealistic visualisations of what was going on, in an age when mainstream daily newspapers rarely published photographs. Illustrated

⁴²¹ Joelle & Gérard Neudin, *Les Cartes Postales* (Ouest France, Rennes: 1982), 5 & 7 and Aline Ripert & Claude Frère, *La Carte Postale, son Histoire, sa Fonction sociale* (Editions de CNRS, Presses Universitaires de Lyon: 1983), 17 & 23.

⁴²² Ripert & Frère, *Carte Postale* (1983), 78, stating that cards carried photographs of each personality as they went in or out of the court room at Rennes, and Ian McDonald, *The Boer War In Postcards* (Sparkford, Wrens Park Publishing: 2001), xi.

⁴²³ Neudin, *Cartes Postales*, (1982) 7, Ripert & Frère, *Carte Postale* (1983), 22 & 28, and Georges Guyonnet, *La Carte Postale Illustrée: Son Histoire, sa Valeur Documentaire* (Paris, Chambre Syndicale Française de la Carte Postale Illustrée: 1947?), 18.

⁴²⁴ Guyonnet, *Carte Postale Illustrée*, 19.

⁴²⁵ Guyonnet, *Carte Postale Illustrée*, 17, cites figures from *Statistique de Berne*, those for Britain amounting to 500 million, and Germany a staggering 1,013 million. On the use of postcards as wartime propaganda, see Marie-Monique Huss, “Pronatalism and the Popular Ideology of the Child in Wartime France: the Evidence of the Picture Postcard” in Richard Wall & Jay Winter (eds), *The Upheaval of War: Family, Work and Welfare in Europe, 1914-18* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1988).

⁴²⁶ Pakenham, *Dieppe* (1967), 183-184.

supplements went only some way to meeting the demand for pictures, and such pictorial material as they did produce was only as accurate and reliable as the artist's fancy allowed.⁴²⁷ Conversely, by the 1890s postcard producers had the technical means to render fairly realistic depictions of what was to be seen in South Africa, either based on, or directly copying, photographic images.⁴²⁸

Consistent with the punchy and simple message that the postcard form allowed, Boer War cards tended to follow a limited number of specific, readily grasped, themes. "Hommage à Kruger", usually accompanied by an image of the President and a few respectful words, remained a consistent one from the very start, through Kruger's 1900 arrival in Europe, to the end.⁴²⁹ One variant on this, resonant for French nationalists, was the joint display, and therefore implicit association, of Marchand with Kruger.⁴³⁰ Another was a restatement of the strictly materialistic, and impliedly dishonourable, motives of the British, in contrast to the Boer leaders.⁴³¹ An obvious theme was the pillory of well-known British figures: Les Norwin's cartoon series depicted a Queen "irritated by a persistent Kruger fly", Lansdowne suffering the famine and war inflicted by his ministry on Transvaal and, of course, Chamberlain.⁴³² There was glee at early Boer victories as well as caricature of ordinary British rank and file.⁴³³ In the context of previous French ideas, cards from early in the war drew on and perpetuated in this new context existing stereotypes of the British, underpinning criticism of unbridled British expansionism more generally.⁴³⁴

⁴²⁷ Pictures 3.1 & 3.2.

⁴²⁸ Neudin, *Cartes Postales* (1982), 7, dating the origins of true photographic postcards to 1891. See examples at McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 36, showing Colenso.

⁴²⁹ See examples at McDonald, *Boer War Postcard*, (2001), 5 & 103-104.

⁴³⁰ Picture 3.3.

⁴³¹ Picture 3.4.

⁴³² McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 99-100 & Picture 3.5.

⁴³³ McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 27 & 48. & Picture 3.6.

⁴³⁴ See examples at McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 49 referencing British seizure of German ships which proved to contain no contraband, and Pictures 3.7 & 3.8.

As the war dragged on, an increasing bitterness in tone emerged, as postcards appropriated wider criticisms of British conduct. The use of dum dum bullets was one aspect of this, a scowling Victoria for example depicted as “La Bonne Fermière”, sewing lead (the bullets) “pour récolter de l’or”.⁴³⁵ Far more widespread was the burning of farms and forced removal of their civilian occupants. Merely a grasping capitalist before the war, by its closing stages Chamberlain seems to have been perceived as a ruthless murderer, the commonest vehicle for that expression running along the lines of “Le Cauchemar de Joe Chamberlain”, pictorially confronting the politician with the deaths for which he was responsible.⁴³⁶

However, in terms of their content, these cards on the war, like invasion literature on this subject, were arguably not saying anything very new, but rather just re-stating, if to a more extreme degree than hitherto, and re-contextualising, ideas and representations that had been in circulation for a long time. Whilst the precise circulation of each postcard (together, often, with publication details) and the nature of their reception remains a subject for speculation, the final qualification to be borne in mind is the extent to which they represented a distinctively French conception of the British. Numerically, German-produced postcards continued to dominate in 1900.⁴³⁷ Swiss, German, and other postcards were purposely produced not just for the home market but for sale and use in France. These Anglophobic expressions first aired outside of France did not necessarily reflect specifically French sentiments.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁵ McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 65 & Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 106.

⁴³⁶ Picture 3.9.

⁴³⁷ Ripert & Frère, *Carte Postale* (1983), 41.

⁴³⁸ See examples at McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 21, from Switzerland. Karl Eisenhart’s invasion novel *Die Abrechnung mit England* (1900), quoted by Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 88-9, 90 & 95 echoed French nationalist rhetoric, to lampoon “the corrupt and mercenary British courts” approach to dealing with neutral ships seized around the blockaded coast of France and “the old business of piracy” carried on by British sailors, and simultaneously disdained arrogant “Parisian loudmouths” and the French lack of any sense of humiliation at a “timorous waiting” for an ally to join in and win the war for them, in contrast to “their national vanity and their obsessive desire for glory”.

In the same way, German and Austrian cartoons on Fashoda and the Boer War also made their way into France, some re-printed in *Le Rire*. Paul Cambon was quick to disassociate his country from this material, an approach indignantly echoed by *Le Matin*, in highlighting a cartoon showing Chamberlain herding British recruits into a shop, containing Victoria at la Caisse, with a frontage reading “John Bull Commerce de viande humaine à la dum dum”. This, it stressed, was from *Ulk*, Berlin, and like other offensive cartoons “ce n’est pas en France elles ont vu le jour: c’est en Italie, en Autriche ou en Allemagne”. The paper’s further protests that French papers, for all that they were criticised by London, “ont toujours respecté les cheveux blancs de la reine” were disingenuous to the extent that the actual cartoon was re-published (with the relevant labelling in French, not German) on the front page with the article.⁴³⁹ In the same way Cambon or Delcassé could not credibly deny that such cartoon or postcard images had no purchase in France if people chose to buy them. So the images, even when not produced in France, clearly had some importance, and constitute a permutation of one strand of hostile thought about the British.

Les Crises Belliqueuses: The Sciences Po Writers and the Boer War.

According to Prochasson, “the Boer War marked a moment of crisis not just in Franco-British diplomatic relations, but also in the perspective of the majority of French intellectuals.”⁴⁴⁰ Although the war was of central concern to the British at all levels of society and occupied much space in French newspapers from 1899-1902, how far it or Fashoda commanded attention in ELSP writing at the time is open to question. So far as their full length works went, this was partly a matter of temporal coincidence, and a generational lull in the sense of liberal Orleanists such as Boutmy giving way to younger, more left wing, figures such as Halévy, who were to attempt to escape Taine’s

⁴³⁹ *Matin*, 8 December 1899 and Picture 3.10.

⁴⁴⁰ Prochasson, “An English Crisis?”, Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 261.

“naturalist and psychologistic schema” and whose aims in writing about Britain would differ from those of their predecessors.⁴⁴¹

Examining the older generation, at the war’s end Paul Leroy-Beaulieu had another fourteen years to live, but in his remaining life, he worked on various prefaces and *L’Économiste Française*, and devoted little time to specific consideration of Britain during the Boer War.⁴⁴² With his most noteworthy work having been written in 1897, Demolins was dead within five years of Vereeniging, although he did publish a leaflet vindicating British actions.⁴⁴³ Boutmy, increasingly restrained by physical deterioration (in particular his eyesight), died the year before Demolins. Much of what Boutmy had had to say about Britain had been long since articulated in his lectures at the École, and publications of the 1890s; His *Essai d’une Psychologie Politique du Peuple Anglais au XIXe Siècle*, though its first edition happened to be published in 1901, represented the accumulated work of several decades, much of that work noted by J E C Bodley in the introduction to the English edition as having been heavily based on long established, often literary, texts.⁴⁴⁴ Subsequent major works focussed on America.

However, Boutmy was able to respond more succinctly to the events of the moment in the perhaps less widely circulated columns of *Annales des Sciences Politiques*; as Crouzet noted, by 1901 he was hard on British diplomacy and colonial policy.⁴⁴⁵ In an examination of British foreign affairs, consistent with his elitist views on who should govern France and indeed the purpose of the ELSP, Boutmy identified “une diplomatie

⁴⁴¹ Charle, “French Intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 237-9.

⁴⁴² P. Leroy-Beaulieu’s major publications after 1900 were *L’Art de Placer et Gérer sa Fortune*, published in successive editions in 1906 and 1908, a 1908 translation of *Collectivism*, and the two volume *La Guerre de 1914 Vue en son Cours*, of 1915 & 1916.

⁴⁴³ Prochasson, “An English Crisis?”, Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 257, and Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 190, doing so principally by criticising the Boers.

⁴⁴⁴ Boutmy, *English People* (1904), J.E.C. Bodley’s Introduction, xvi-xix & xxi-xxvii.

⁴⁴⁵ Crouzet, “Communication franco-britannique”, *Revue Historique*, Vol 254, (1975), 125, footnote 1.

sans scrupule” which he blamed on who was now in charge in Britain.⁴⁴⁶ Electoral reform had opened the way for voting by “des hommes qui n’ont personnellement aucune culture”, so that “une question comme Fachoda sera tranchée en définitive par des paysans et des ouvriers qui n’ont guère changé depuis plus de quatre cents ans”.⁴⁴⁷ Democracy was therefore responsible for “le personnage inconscient et brutal d’un Chamberlain”, the politician through whom the national temperament found its aptest expression on the world stage.⁴⁴⁸ Fashoda and the Boer War consequently verified rather than altered Boutmy’s long established views on what that English temperament comprised: “le monde est aux anglais comme une immense matière à effort”, for “C’est l’idée de l’activité industrielle et féconde qui occupe toutes les avenues de l’esprit”.⁴⁴⁹ Paralleling his comments on attitudes towards the Irish, for foreigners (whether French, Boer or colonial subjects) there was no natural sympathy or pity from the British, just “une sentimentalité sincère” exemplified by religiously inspired anti slavery measures.⁴⁵⁰ Similarly, traces of what Boutmy had previously identified in the British constitution re-surfaced in “une indifférence cynique pour des formes”, when it suited British interests, at the Bloemfontein conference.⁴⁵¹ Much of this was pitched in explicit contrast to “les races plus contemplatives” like the French, regarding their nation as “un membre de la grande famille humaine” with not activity but honour, loyalty and justice to the fore.⁴⁵²

Boutmy’s attitudes were repeated and in some ways developed by less prominent Sciences Po writers in the *Annales*. Paul Hamelle added more venom in his pen portrait

⁴⁴⁶ Émile Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais et sa Fonction à L’Extérieur”, in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 15, (1900), 688.

⁴⁴⁷ Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 696.

⁴⁴⁸ Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 703.

⁴⁴⁹ Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 687 & 690.

⁴⁵⁰ Boutmy, *English People*, (1904), 92-95 and Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 690 & 691.

⁴⁵¹ Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 702.

⁴⁵² Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 690.

of the man held to be behind the Boer War, but formed much the same conclusion that “ce radical imperialiste jingoïste, froidement impétueux, incisive, souple et tenace, mégalomane, charlatan, bluffeur, mélange de Palmerston et de Beaconsfield... est en parfaite harmonie avec les aspirations de ses concitoyens”.⁴⁵³ Two years later, he refocused criticisms already made by Boutmy of Britain’s weak liberal opposition by pinpointing the failure of Liberal Imperialist Rosebery either to condemn “les passions d’un parvenu comme Chamberlain” or criticise the war, instead accepting that “la guerre était juste, puisqu’elle était utile et nécessaire”.⁴⁵⁴ Whilst sceptical of “la légende d’une agression de deux Républiques faibles” against “une Angleterre assoiffée d’or”, Hamelle ultimately recognised “une loi d’histoire en train de s’accomplir” in the war, whatever the iniquity. The Boer Republics were “un pittoresque anachronisme” in a contest between “deux âges de l’humanité” in which the older had to succumb.⁴⁵⁵ Behind the veneer of criticism, therefore, Hamelle implicitly vindicated British actions.

Capitaine Malleterre (1858- ?) also wrestled with a paradox in his stance on British actions in Sudan. Having provided a balanced view of the pre 1896 situation when “les procédés traditionnels de prudence et d’économie” overruled any desire to revenge Gordon’s death, he praised the “exécution impeccable” of a campaign conducted with foresight, preparation and decisiveness by Kitchener, who, typical of the “prudence habituelle” of the British, had left nothing to chance.⁴⁵⁶ Malleterre separated ends from means, so “laissant du côté les griefs et les rancunes contre une politique brutale et déplaisante, nous pouvons admirer l’art et la méthode avec lequel les Anglais savent

⁴⁵³ Paul Hamelle, “La Crise Sud-Africaine”, in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 15, (1900), 7.

⁴⁵⁴ Paul Hamelle, “L’Homme Qui Vient”, in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 17, (1902), 500.

According to Boutmy, “L’Etat Anglais”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 698, only 51 MPs supported Morley’s attacks on the 1898 desecration of the Mahdi’s tomb, or the later use of dum dum bullets in South Africa.

⁴⁵⁵ Hamelle, “L’Homme”, *Annales*, Vol 17, (1902), 698, & “Crise Sud-Africaine”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 16.

⁴⁵⁶ Capitaine Malleterre, “D’Alexandria à Khartoum” in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 14, (1899), 28, 29, 37, 33, 31 & 40.

frapper un coup décisif”.⁴⁵⁷ Another mode of reconciliation lay in criticism of the French government for imagining Britain had after 1885 forgotten about Sudan, and Malletterre’s concluding comments that both Kitchener and Marchand represented “les meilleurs exemples des expéditions coloniales,” and also, in different ways one assumes, “une leçon éclatante des résultats qu’on peut obtenir quand on mesure les moyens au but”.⁴⁵⁸

More eccentric within the *Annales* was the anonymous MB, who contributed two articles on the British army, in so doing calling to mind more of what Driant was to say than Boutmy. Both drew on British stereotypes, which clearly influenced how MB wrote about the army and “la psychologie militaire de l’Angleterre”, incarnated in soldiers seeing themselves as a part of “la race dominatrice et envahissante par excellence”.⁴⁵⁹ Lengthy technical appraisals of the army’s weaknesses as revealed by the war were garnished by Driant-like clichés, about the poor training and morale of “les soldats anglais, braves, disciplinés... des mercenaires sortis de la basse classe”.⁴⁶⁰ Cynical and brutal British diplomacy, possessed of “l’art suprême de l’intimidation”, could not negate threats to Britain’s mastery of the seas or British vulnerability to “un coup droit violent et décisif”.⁴⁶¹ In MB’s opinion, English individualism and liberty, though assets to British commercial success, obstructed the formation “de nouvelles institutions militaires capables de donner à l’empire la force indispensable à son ambition et à son maintien”.⁴⁶² This broad statement presaged Driant’s later remarks on the incompatibility of British economic and political culture with a much needed policy of conscription. Departing most emphatically from the ELSP line, MB saw in Britain the

⁴⁵⁷ Malletterre, “D’Alexandria”, *Annales*, Vol 14, (1899), 33.

⁴⁵⁸ Malletterre, “D’Alexandria”, *Annales*, Vol 14, (1899), 32 & 44.

⁴⁵⁹ MB, “L’Armée Anglaise” in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 14, (1899), 664.

⁴⁶⁰ MB, “L’Armée Anglaise” in *Annales des Sciences Politiques*, Vol 15, (1900), 213.

⁴⁶¹ MB, “L’Armée Anglaise”, *Annales*, Vol 14, (1899), 668 & 669.

⁴⁶² MB, “L’Armée Anglaise”, *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 208.

overall weakness of one of “les colosses aux pieds d’argile” and, in much the same vein as *La Guerre Fatale*, claimed that the Fashodas of yesterday would carry on into tomorrow, perpetuating “des siècles de luttes... dans le sang des deux races les âpres rancoeurs des inguérissables blessures”.⁴⁶³

From the younger generation, Elie Halévy’s research at and immediately after the turn of the century was directed to the longer term interaction of internal political, social and religious factors within Britain which had little to do with the specific events of the immediate moment.⁴⁶⁴ These were addressed, but in his *Histoire du Peuple Anglais au XIXe Siècle* which came out in five volumes (progressing chronologically from 1815 – 1914) in the years 1912-24. This made no attempt to fudge Halévy’s view of Fashoda as preceded by “orgies of Imperialism” at Omdurman, “a massacre rather than a battle” followed by the unseemly desecration of the Mahdi’s tomb, and ending in a French unconditional capitulation without precedent.⁴⁶⁵

At the time of the war, Halévy’s views typically cast the widespread calm with which early defeats were greeted in Britain in contrast to “how the news of a disaster would be received on the boulevards, how the press would comment it [sic], how the opposition would trade on it in parliament”.⁴⁶⁶ This picture of national unity in crisis mirrored typical ELSP views of Britain, and, implicitly, concerns about French disunity. In a permutation on Boutmy and Hamelle’s thought, Halévy interpreted Englishmen, taken individually inclined to “repudiate any solidarity with Chamberlain”, to be “as a body...

⁴⁶³ MB, “L’Armée Anglaise” *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 215, and “L’Armée Anglaise” *Annales*, Vol 14, (1899), 665.

⁴⁶⁴ Crouzet, “Halévy”, Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 70. Utilitarianism was the subject of his January-May 1898 research trip.

⁴⁶⁵ Elie Halévy, *A History of the English People*, Epilogue, Vol 1, 1895-1906, (London, Ernest Benn Ltd: 1929. Trans. F. Watkin), 59 & 61.

⁴⁶⁶ Crouzet, “Halévy”, Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 72, quoting a letter written by Halévy in 1899.

very grateful to Chamberlain to know how to initiate pieces of blackguardism, to which they unconsciously aspire, as a great nation".⁴⁶⁷ Further comment on "Anglo-Saxon phlegm", the self control of "this silent, fatalistic, optimistic nation, which dispenses with over excitement" and British lack of vindictiveness, were balanced by thoughts of the "brutal manners" of British diplomacy likely to be resumed after the war, and recurrent anxiety that the British would shortly fight France and possibly start a general war from which he saw "the English alone" as "sure of profit".⁴⁶⁸ Despite Halévy's personal antipathy towards "mountebanks in red breeches" like Driant, Crouzet goes so far as to argue that, oddly, Halévy did in 1899-1900 come to believe in the inevitability of war between Britain and France-La Guerre Fatale.⁴⁶⁹ Further, Halévy's "distrust of British foreign policy", if diminishing, persisted after the end of the war, into mid-1903. However, all of this was expressed in private correspondence not published at the time. Notwithstanding a hatred of Chamberlain that persisted into 1906, a self confessedly anglophile tone, buttressed by the idea that "during the last two centuries England has given Europe some lessons in politics", had by then crept into his writing, and it was this which became more apparent in the greater bulk of what he later published.⁴⁷⁰

Jacques Bardoux was therefore unique among the Sciences Po writers in formulating and publishing in a considered full length book form views on the war close to its own time, namely *Essai d'une Psychologie de l'Angleterre Contemporaine: Les crises belliqueuses*, (1906). Wide ranging as Bardoux's treatment of movements within nineteenth-century Britain proved to be, his own interpretive framework, clearly set out in the book's title, was never long overlooked in the construction of the text. Everything,

⁴⁶⁷ Crouzet, "Halévy", Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 72, quoting a letter written by Halévy in November 1900.

⁴⁶⁸ Crouzet, "Halévy", Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 72, 73 & 73: 73, 74 & 74-76, quoting various letters written by Halévy from October 1899 to May 1902.

⁴⁶⁹ Crouzet, "Halévy", Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 75.

⁴⁷⁰ Crouzet, "Halévy", Chassaigne Dockrill (eds), *Anglo French Relations* (2002), 76 & 78, quoting letters written by Halévy on 23 May 1906 and 14 September 1905.

then, no matter how far apparently removed from war, was sooner or later evaluated as to the extent to which it engendered aggression and warlike tendencies in the British. For example, campaigns for social reform invoked “de l’honneur national, de l’orgueil britannique”, their success stemming from British realisation of the inconsistency between the poverty and the dirty towns, and their national self image. The English

trouva la premier la formule de la liberté et de la vérité religieuse, qui semblait destiné à guider, avec certitude les autres nations dans la voie du progrès politique et du progrès moral, est aujourd’hui celui qui tolère les spectacles les plus hideux, les souffrances les plus imméritées.⁴⁷¹

Largely overlooking any substantive benefits that legislative efforts directed towards reform might bring to the disadvantaged, Bardoux instead observed that the social remorse propelling the campaigns reappeared in new forms, which favoured the growth of Imperialism. Simultaneously, “en apaisant des souffrances et en réparant des iniquités, il contribue à enrayer la poussée libérale et prépare la réaction conservatrice”, which he dated to post-1874.⁴⁷² Likewise, somehow “L’Idéalisme littéraire”, strongly depending on a “faculté de sentir”, earlier exhibited by figures like Dickens and Ruskin, peaceable as they may have been, fragmented into works by Tennyson, Kipling and others of a more bombastic cast.⁴⁷³

This was a process of analysis that had its own limitations, but kept it to the forefront of the readers’ minds that nineteenth-century Britain was a country wracked by periodic “crises belliqueuses”, that is to say occasions when public opinion was disturbed by or goaded into a panic by the threat of war. Chapter VI listed the first of these as having taken place in 1823, 1833-5, 1845-8 and 1852.⁴⁷⁴ In each of these episodes, the animus was directed partly or in full against France, Bardoux blaming the bellicose tendencies of the aristocracy, led by Palmerston “le grande propriétaire jovial et sanguine, d’une

⁴⁷¹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 136 & 136-137.

⁴⁷² Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses*, (1906), 137 & 138.

⁴⁷³ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 238.

⁴⁷⁴ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 302.

intelligence médiocre mais d'une volonté d'airan, penseur à court vue at orateur sans prétention, serviteur aveugle de son parti et son pays".⁴⁷⁵ Despite the Crimean War and the panic of 1859-61, which Bardoux described at length, he depicted the years of 1854-74 as ones of exceptional peacefulness.⁴⁷⁶ This was thanks to "le merveilleux essor qu'impriment à l'activité commerciale et industrielle de l'Angleterre les premières applications du libre échange", and the rise of the Liberal party backed by middle classes partial to trade, and therefore peace.⁴⁷⁷ Conversely, the slump of 1875, and subsequent economic crises, created an atmosphere in which further crises belliqueuses could unfold in 1876-8, and in 1885 when, according to Bardoux, "les sans-travail aspirent à la gloire de l'uniforme, les industriels aux bénéfices des armaments".⁴⁷⁸ Disraeli proved to be "un homme d'état sans scruples" who artificially created crises in order "donner satisfaction aux tendances belliqueuses de la race anglaise".⁴⁷⁹ Internal British problems drove him to "une sanglante diversion" which, in Bardoux's thesis, was readily taken up because "l'arrêt des industries semble laisser sans emploi une certaine quantité d'énergie nationale" that happily turned to these struggles instead.⁴⁸⁰ These later crises may have exhibited some new traits in relation to those prior to 1860, but Bardoux, like Paul Hamelle, placed Disraeli, then Chamberlain, as following in the footsteps of their more notable predecessor Palmerston as "ces apôtres de la combativité nationale".⁴⁸¹ The Boer War was merely the natural product of another such crisis, from 1897 onwards, although the Fashoda incident was not mentioned at all in Bardoux's lengthy work, up until the end of the book.⁴⁸²

⁴⁷⁵ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 304.

⁴⁷⁶ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 323-333.

⁴⁷⁷ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 319.

⁴⁷⁸ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 347.

⁴⁷⁹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 340 & 346.

⁴⁸⁰ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 343 & 340.

⁴⁸¹ Hamelle, "Crise Sud-Africaine", *Annales*, Vol 15, (1900), 7 and Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 303.

⁴⁸² Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 546.

Bardoux devoted his penultimate chapter to a discussion of British opinion in relation to the South African war. In so doing, he set himself the difficult task of reconciling Britain as a potentially amicable country whose friendship was worth courting, and appeasing a French public opinion up until very recently manifesting prominent signs of sympathy for the Boers. The first of these requirements was met by a seemingly impartial presentation of the British justifications advanced for the war. Bardoux drew heavily on *The Times History of the War*, as well as the Foreign Office *Blue Book* and sundry other sources such as *La vérité sur la guerre en Transvaal*, a “brochure de propaganda anglais, distribuée en France pour convertir l’opinion publique”, to detail, in turn, the historical, diplomatic and moral arguments espoused by London.⁴⁸³ These were then met with his own lines, showing that the foreign Uitlanders in the Boer republics were far from being blameless victims downtrodden by a uniformly unsympathetic Boer administration, contradicting the London line that the Boer leadership had done nothing to meet Uitlander grievances, was corrupt, and had deliberately provoked war in 1899, and contending that events since 1902 demonstrated the lack of any substance to British claims to have wanted to bring a higher civilisation to a backward “nation intolérante et routinière”, unfitted to any further colonists but “pasteurs isolés et nomades”.⁴⁸⁴

All of this raised the question of how British public opinion could have so badly misjudged the rights and wrongs of the case when everything was, apparently, so clear to the French. His explanation went deeper than a mere conscious manipulation of opinion by the press in, for example, quoting selectively and therefore in an implicitly distorted fashion from the writings of Ruskin.⁴⁸⁵ The more profound answer lay within the interpretive framework established by Bardoux across the preceding nine chapters.

⁴⁸³ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 517.

⁴⁸⁴ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 543 & 544.

⁴⁸⁵ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 211.

Drawing the contrast between “Un esprit français”, arriving slowly at a conclusion only after carefully weighing the arguments but easily dislodged from that conclusion on discovery of “Une erreur de logique, un manque de symétrie, une lacune”, Bardoux asserted that:

L’intelligence anglaise n’éprouve pas le besoin et est incapable d’élever un vaste temple dont la logique dessine les lignes harmonieuses et que la clarté baigne de sa lumière...Elle croit à la vérité d’une idée avec un élan d’autant plus inébranlable qu’il est plus rapide. Ses convictions sont déterminées par un fait concret, sans qu’il soit nécessaire de la soumettre à un examen méthodique...Une fois formées, elles ont tout la solidité des blockhaus.⁴⁸⁶

The contrast with France had no need to be so explicitly stated in comment on British disregard for international law, resonant as it was with events of less than one year prior to the war when they had disdained President Faure and others’ claims to Fashoda on the basis that, within the 1885 Conference of Berlin ground rules, it belonged to the first European power able effectively to occupy the place.⁴⁸⁷ By way of explanation, Bardoux identified some of the British arguments as sustained by an essentially religious sense of mission, and reiterated his views on British lack of empathy, now directed outwards to foreigners rather than between classes:

La vertu morale et civique les empêchent d’admettre la nécessité d’une morale et d’une loi humaine. Leurs sensibilités lentes et refoulées, leurs pensées concrètes et insulaires ne leur permettent ni d’aimer ni de comprendre les autres peuples.⁴⁸⁸

There was some novelty in Bardoux’s claim that the war would invigorate British levels of energy, hitherto held to be so high: “Émotions belliqueuses rendront aux industriels anglais leur énergie, aux commerçants leur spirit d’initiative, aux consommateurs leur patriotisme”.⁴⁸⁹ However, references to “leur hypocrisie et leur brutalité” and to “le

⁴⁸⁶ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 524-525.

⁴⁸⁷ Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 8 & 15-16, and Lewis, *Race to Fashoda* (1988), 60 & 178.

⁴⁸⁸ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 534, see also 16 on empathy, and 78-79 on the English as a people “du rôle privilégié dont Dieu l’aurait chargé”, with a “mission providentielle”, Cf. Prochasson, “An English Crisis?”, Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 264.

⁴⁸⁹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 539.

besoin d'une lutte" for the sake of it, were consistent with more traditional and long-held views.⁴⁹⁰

At one level, Bardoux's stance on the war in South Africa therefore did not stray too far from the hostility shown towards Britain at the time of the war itself. He differed not only in seeking to take a more thoughtful approach to the war than those who produced invasion literature or postcards, or indeed the press, but also in looking to present, if not a balanced viewpoint, than at least one in which the British attitude became comprehensible to his readers. The end of *Crises Belliqueuses* may thus best be summed up as one of understanding condemnation, and further evidence of how a view of the ELSP writers as simply anglophile should be qualified.

Prochasson maintains that 1898-1901 represented "a turning point... the positive signs turned to negative" in writing on Britain.⁴⁹¹ Bardoux was one example of this. Whether coincidentally or not, events in the period 1895-1903 seem to have significantly altered the romanticised sentiments displayed in *Memories of Oxford*. Britain was now best epitomised in Bardoux's judgment of Chamberlain:

l'homme d'état par son horreur pour les idées générales et son utilitarisme pratique, par son ardent chauvinisme et son indéracinable orgueil incarné de la manière la plus complète les caractères de l'Angleterre contemporaine.⁴⁹²

Addressing the nature of British Socialism, Bardoux transformed his previous comparisons of Oxford cricketers to Ancient Greeks into the contention that sport was, for social purposes, an essentially a conservative force restraining the working classes, diverting otherwise revolutionary energies and thoughts, as religion: "La noblesse des

⁴⁹⁰ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 533 546, & 317.

⁴⁹¹Prochasson, "An English Crisis?", Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007) , 260.

⁴⁹² Bardoux, *Crises politiques* (1907), 38.

chapelles puritaines, les violences de football auront été des agents de paix sociale”.⁴⁹³

This viewpoint foreshadowed that expressed by Paul Dottin in the 1920s, suggesting that football served to divert British working class men, much as cinemas did their women, in a provision analogous with the *Circenses et Panem* of Imperial Rome.⁴⁹⁴

To the peaceful and idyllic experiences of 1895 was juxtaposed a picture of “en fait une société particulièrement belliqueuse”, a mood fuelled by reserve, pride and knowledge of war derived only at second hand from sanitised press reports and poets, thanks to the lack of any recent invasion of Britain.⁴⁹⁵ The continuous emphasis on British bellicosity led to some paradoxes: Bardoux pitched British “sympathie pour les animaux” against their enjoyment of “un combat de boxe qui ressemble à une lutte des bouchers, à un match de foot-ball qui rappelle le corps à corps des batailles”.⁴⁹⁶ Bardoux further abandoned his previous views on British sensitivity, towards their own poor or otherwise. Weighing the role of willpower in the British character, he started his 1906 work with the observation that “La force de volonté a pour corollaire nécessaire une certaine atonie de la sensibilité”.⁴⁹⁷ He went onto paint a picture of repressed emotions, phlegmatic authors, “le policeman impassible” and “La solidité d’un système nerveux” so emphatic that British subjects were deemed less dangerous to conduct surgical operations upon than others.⁴⁹⁸

Most tellingly of all, praise for the Oxford students’ sympathy for the poor in 1895 gave way to later condemnation of the social inequality that had given occasion to the poverty. Drawing on 1880 figures to place the British example in an explicitly

⁴⁹³ Bardoux, “Angleterre”, in A.Leroy-Beaulieu, *Socialisme* (1909), 44.

⁴⁹⁴ Guyard, *Grande-Bretagne* (1954), 182-183, citing Paul Dottin, “L’Angleterre Inconnue Ou Yahoooland”, in *Revue de France*, (1922).

⁴⁹⁵ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 23 & 28.

⁴⁹⁶ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 11.

⁴⁹⁷ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 7.

⁴⁹⁸ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 8-9.

comparative context, Bardoux concluded that ownership of land in Britain was even more concentrated into the hands of a tiny minority than in Germany, Austria-Hungary or Russia.⁴⁹⁹ He further cast Britain as backward next to “les sociétés civilisées” who had already achieved “une repartition plus harmonieuse des capitaux mobiliers”.⁵⁰⁰ The most extended contrast was with France, with its 3.5 million proprietors exploiting their own land across one quarter of the country, and the queues of small capitalists upon which rested “l’évolution démocratique de notre société”, as opposed to “la structure oligarchique, les conceptions aristocratique de la société anglaise”.⁵⁰¹ Albeit largely deriving his material from second hand accounts, Bardoux remained consistent in disdain for the temperament and lifestyle of “La plèbe britannique, à dire vrai, elle forme un peuple distinct”. As to their neighbourhoods in Deptford, Bermondsey Walworth and Camberwell, “il est impossible de dire la laideur désolée de cette ville”, with nothing in France - again a comparison, again more favourable to France than he had been in 1895 - that even approached them except perhaps “les faubourgs d’Armentières”.⁵⁰²

Conclusion.

Considering the wider diplomatic context, Fashoda and the Boer War were not the only events of 1898-1902 to impact on Anglo-French relations, but were central in creating an atmosphere of mutual rivalry. There were some developments that pointed towards a more conciliatory future for Anglo-French relations, but many others, parallel with the incident and war, which highlighted tensions. For example, British attitudes towards the Dreyfus case, placed by Tombs on a par with Fashoda and the Boer War, entailed disdain on the part of the British for the French and their institutions, in turn exciting indignant Anglophobic defences of France and counter-charges of British hypocrisy,

⁴⁹⁹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 54-56.

⁵⁰⁰ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 60.

⁵⁰¹ Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 57 & 62-63.

⁵⁰² Bardoux, *Crises belliqueuses* (1906), 49. Bardoux footnoted Charles Booth, *Heart of Empire*, as the basis of his comments from pages 49-53, with no explicit indication of close up, first hand experience of his own of this section of the working classes.

especially from the French anti Dreyfusard right.⁵⁰³ Even where there was potential for harmony, these overshadowing events tended to distort or sour what might otherwise have occasioned an assertion of shared ideals. Britain's much publicised stance at The 1899 Hague Conference, favouring International Arbitration and the ban on exploding bullets, gave later scope for French newspapers to contrast British rhetoric on these subjects to their practice relative to Transvaal, only months later up to and after the outbreak of war, so breathing further new life into the old accusations of English hypocrisy.⁵⁰⁴

Given that France was a participant in the Fashoda incident, whereas there was no official French involvement in Britain's South African conflict, it is paradoxical that French reactions to the Boer War seem to have been much larger in scale and more radical than those to Fashoda.⁵⁰⁵ Within invasion literature, the war gave a new lease of life to several old British stereotypes, and allowed authors like Driant to push their villainisation of the British further and more credibly. However, the war prompted little of substance that was different in *La Guerre Fatale*, the attitudes and action of which were in many ways merely a more detailed re-working of *Plus d'Angleterre*, published well before 1898. The new medium of postcards, despite its technical novelty and the

⁵⁰³ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 420-422, with Cornick, "Réception de l'Affaire", Drouin (ed), *L'Affaire Dreyfus* (1994), 580, pointing to the example of the anti-Dreyfusard *Revue de Deux Mondes*. See Appendix 3 for schedules of these other events.

⁵⁰⁴ For examples *Le Gaulois*, 3 October, contrasting British talk of peace at the Hague with now ongoing war preparations, and *Le Matin*, 3 October 1899, remarking on British willingness to submit to arbitration with the USA over a Venezuelan border dispute: "Il est regrettable que le gouvernement britannique n'ait pas adopté une procédure analogue dans son conflit avec le Transvaal." *Le Matin* 10 & 13 October 1899, firstly critical not only of Britain but of Europe as a whole for failing to make representations to Britain- "Elle ne trouvera jamais une meilleure occasion de laisser parler sa conscience"- secondly, identified Britain's specific shipping to South Africa of "dum dum perfectionnées", despite its Hague commitments.

⁵⁰⁵ Charle, "French Intellectuals" Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 246-247, and Prochasson, "An English Crisis?", Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 260, and 262 citing the example of a minor Anglophile writer Francis Charnes, whose successive *Revue de Deux Mondes* articles, willing to forgive Fashoda and initially critical of the Boer governments, ended their "long indulgence" of Britain in a November 1899 poem calling for the downfall of the now abhorred and universal foe of all nations.

more realistic depictions of war scenes it could circulate, also tended to reflect those older stereotypes and re-work them in a new context.

In contrast, for the Sciences Po writers events in 1898-1902 potentially posed a problem. If one takes them simply as Anglophiles, the ambiguity of their reactions to Fashoda and the war, events that clearly challenged any positive things that they might say about Britain, is difficult to explain. Whilst Bardoux's account of the Boer War was not wholly unsympathetic to Britain, and Malletierre got around the problem of simultaneously admiring British actions in the Sudan and a sense of injustice at Fashoda by separating means from ends, the *Annales des Sciences Politiques* also gave vent to unmitigatedly critical views of Britain in MB's articles. Some of what Boutmy, echoed by Hamelle, had to say struck at the heart of his previous arguments, for example on the benefits of the British constitution. Fashoda and the Boer War showed a British polity increasingly controlled by precisely the uneducated masses from whose influence the ELSP was meant to save France. The attitude of flexibility underlying the British constitution was now to be used for the cynical end of bullying foreigners when it suited British needs. It is unfortunate that, in the confined space of their articles, Boutmy and Hamelle were not able to avail themselves of the opportunity for a more wide ranging re-appraisal of Boutmy's views on Britain, in light of contemporary events. However, all of these attitudes become easier to reconcile with previous Sciences Po writings about Britain if one accepts that these were by no means as anglophile as some, including contemporary critics of the ELSP, maintained. Although some ELSP writers shared Anglophile sentiments, these might be swayed or hushed by events such as Fashoda or the Boer War when Britain was judged to be acting in an anti-French or aggressive manner.

Illustrations (2).

Chapter 3: Picture 3.1 The extract from *Le Petit Journal* on the cover of Bernard Lugan, *La Guerre des Boers, 1899-1902* (1998), for example, showed the British under siege in unlikely looking spotless white trousers, topped by bright scarlet jackets the use of which had been abandoned in the field, in favour of the more practical khaki, some two decades earlier.



Picture 3.2 *Le Matin*, 17 November 1899, attesting the French public's appetite for images from South Africa, an advert for a book of pictures from the Boer War, with the artist unable to resist underlining British treachery by depicting Queen Victoria as a hissing serpent.



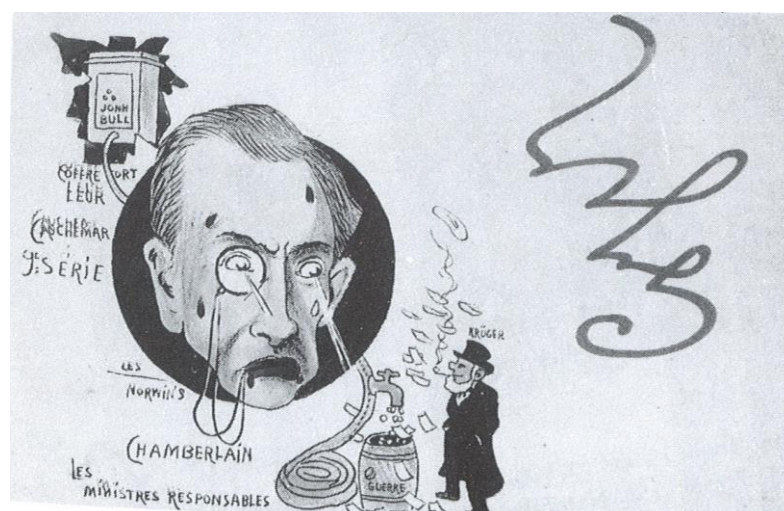
Picture 3.3 Postcard (detail), explicitly linking Marchand to Kruger, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 61.



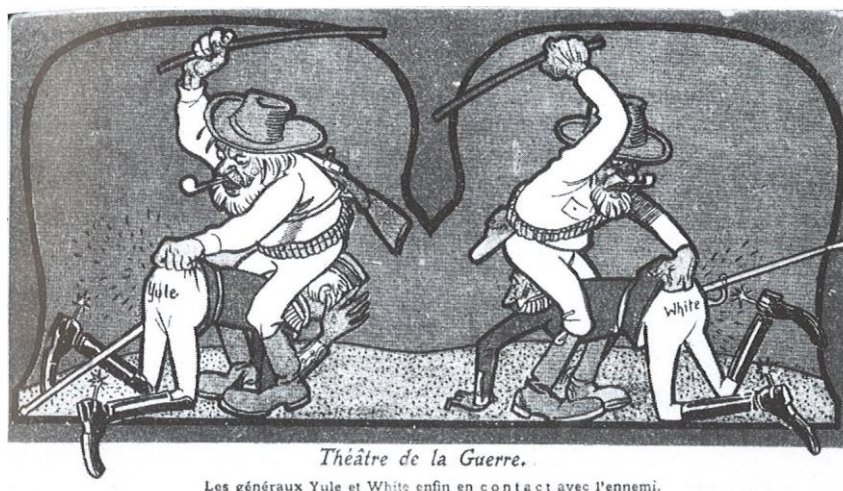
Picture 3.4 Summing up British motives for war, a postcard juxtaposing Boer leaders on one side of a card “Pour la liberté et le droit”, opposite British generals on the other marked “Pour l’argent et les diamants”, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 54.



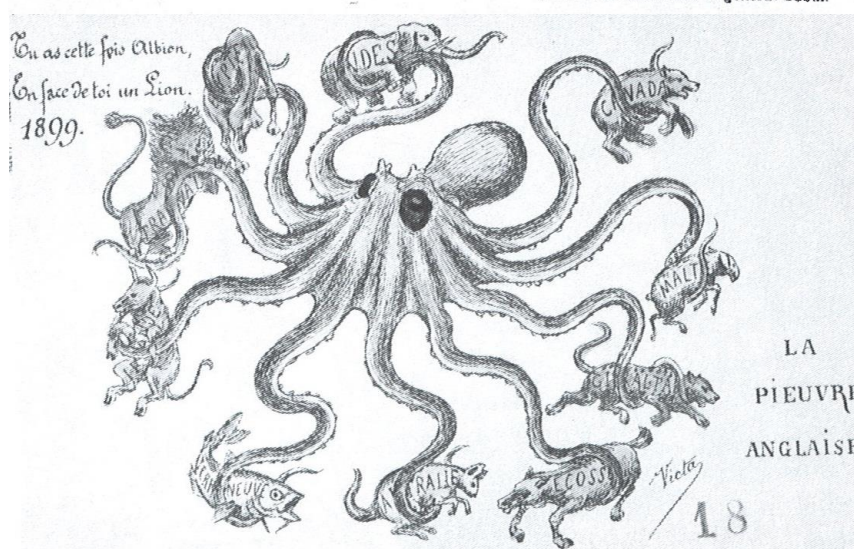
Picture 3.5 Postcard showing a distressed Chamberlain weeping over the money being wasted in pursuing the conflict, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 100.



Picture 3.6 Postcard deriving pleasure from British Generals White and Yule getting thrashed by two hard bitten pipe-smoking Boers, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 27.



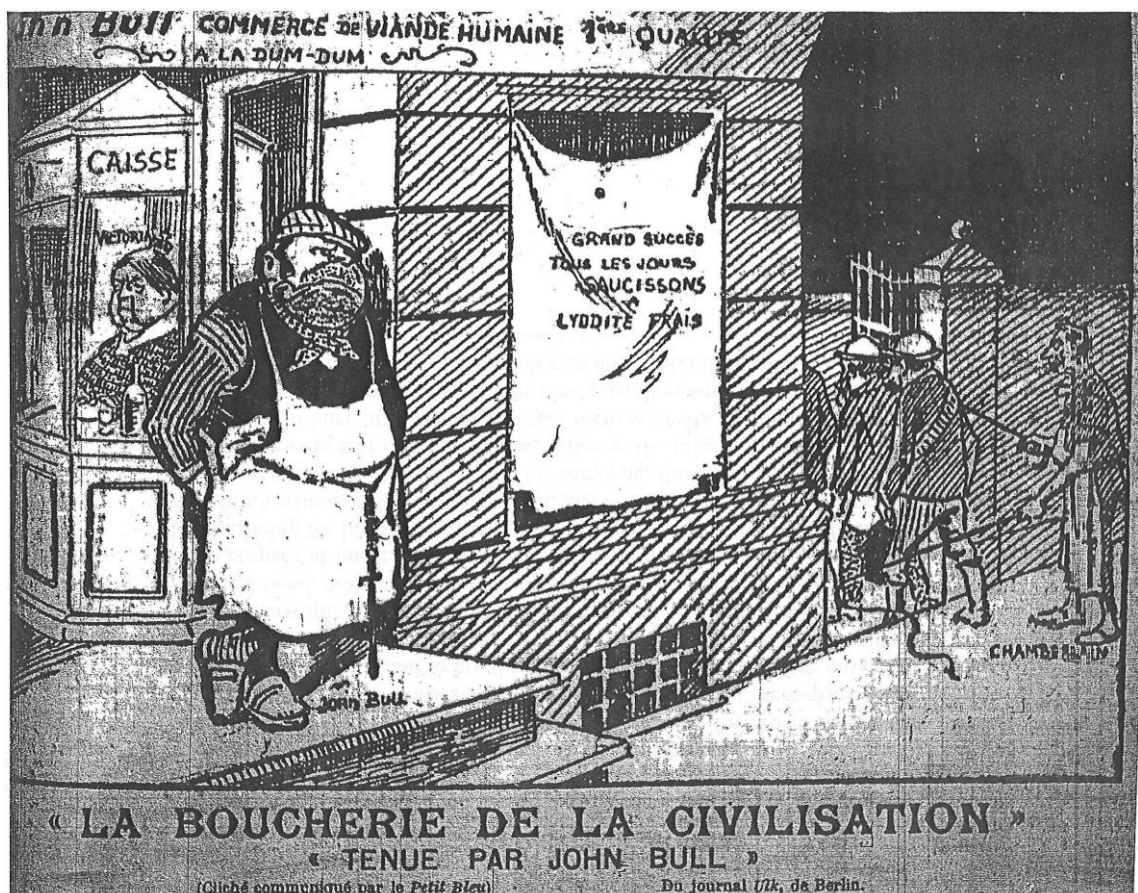
Pictures 3.7 & 3.8 Postcards depicting zealous General Booth leading his female Salvation Army “soldiers” to the rescue of the army in South Africa, and “La Pieuvre Anglaise” of 1899 extending its tentacles around a wide range of other animal-nations, only to be defied by the symbolic Transvaal lion, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 20 & 47.



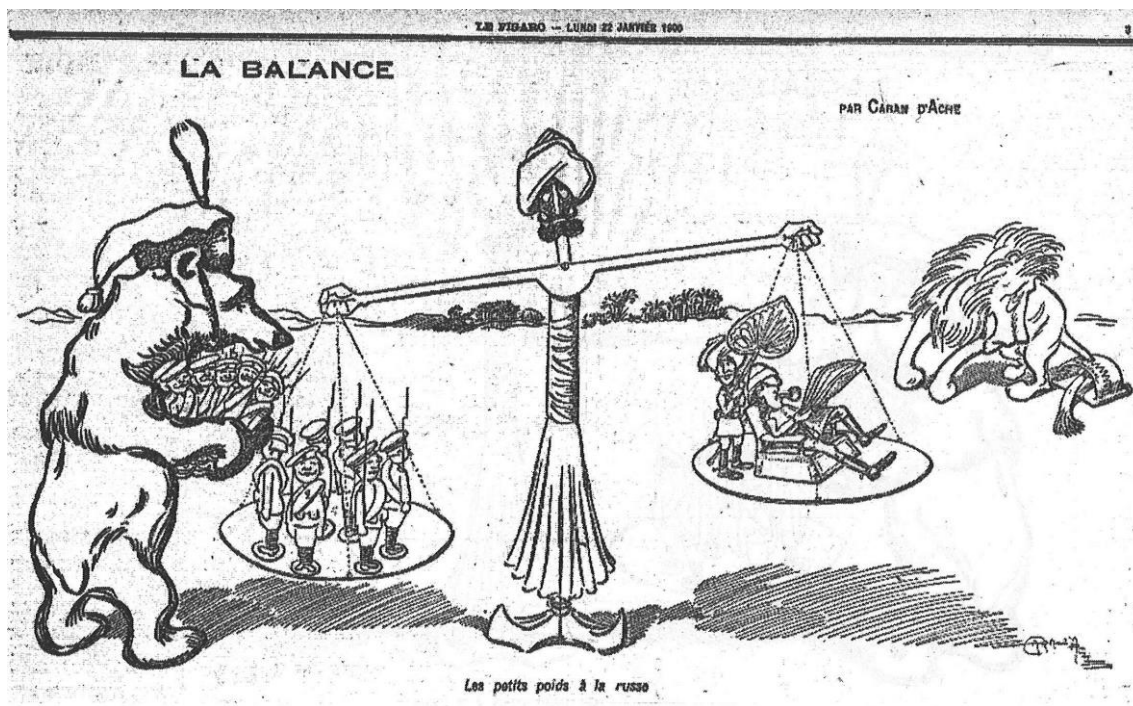
Picture 3.9 Chamberlain's nightmare, varying from the approach taken in 3.5 by reproaching him with responsibility for the death and suffering caused by the war, from McDonald, *Boer War Postcards* (2001), 117.



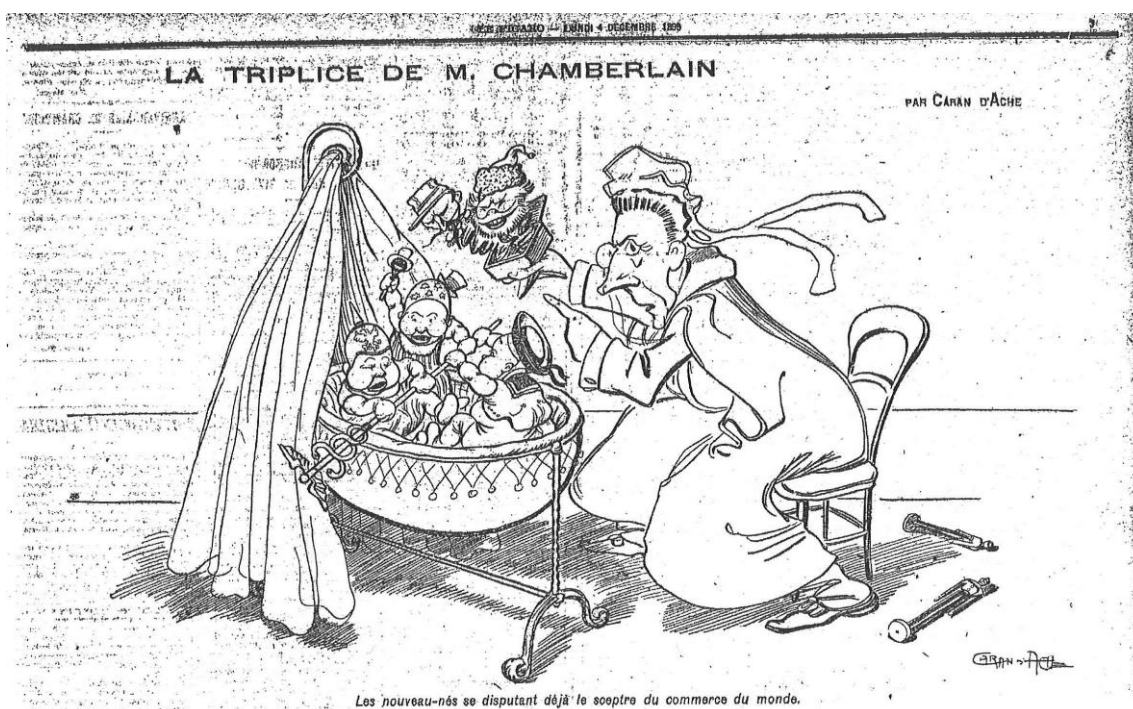
Picture 3.10 *Le Matin*, 8 December 1899, the cartoon from Germany that the paper purported to condemn.



Chapter 4: Picture 4.1 *Le Figaro*, 22 January 1900, “La Balance”, Britain, Russia and the potential impact of the Boer War on the balance of military power on India’s borders.

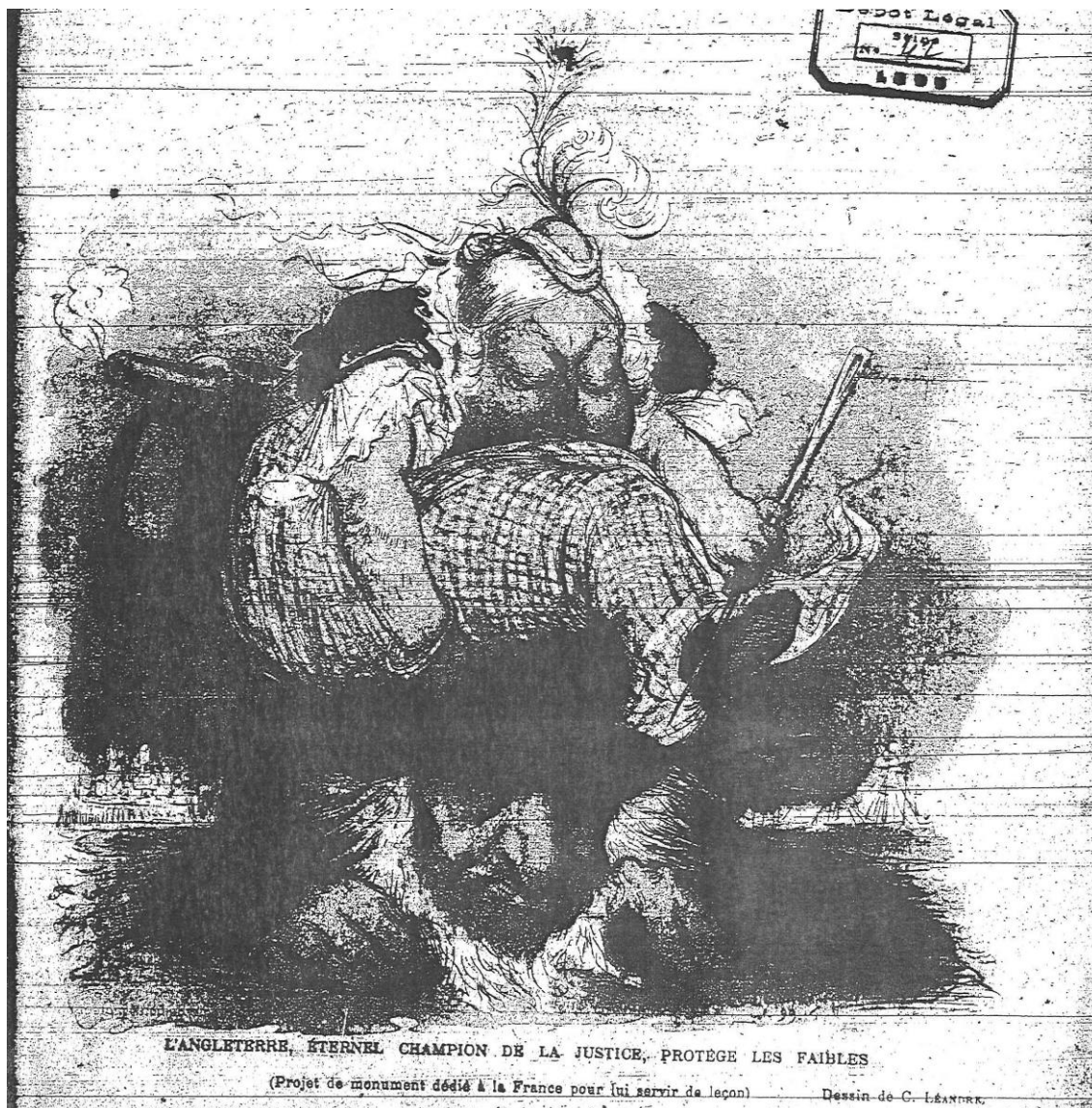


Picture 4.2 *Le Figaro*, 4 December 1899, “La Triplice de M. Chamberlain”. Caran d’Ache (1858-1909), a regular cartoonist for this paper after 1898, was clearly sceptical that fear of the Franco-Russian jack-in-the-box being wielded by nanny Chamberlain would suffice to overcome the trade rivalries of the British, German and American “babies” depicted in the drawing.



Pictures 4.3 & 4.4 Notable examples of Charles Léandre's cartoons, from *Le Rire*, from 2 December 1899 a less than flattering depiction of Victoria and Wilhelm II that expressed scepticism as to the supposed family, private, reasons, for the Kaiser's trip to Britain whilst the scruffy Kruger figure in the background is ignored by both Monarchs, and, from 7 October 1899, a sarcastic comment on "L'Angleterre, Éternel Champion de la justice", the drawing that caused most offence to the British royal family.





L'ANGLETERRE, ÉTERNEL CHAMPION DE LA JUSTICE, PROTEGE LES FAIBLES

(Projet de monument dédié à la France pour lui servir de leçon)

Dessin de C. LÉANDRE.

4: Irredeemable Foe or Potential Friend; Britain and the French Diplomatic Response to Fashoda and the Boer War.

Introduction.

The broader diplomatic context shaped the responses of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the Quai d'Orsay, to Fashoda and the Boer War. In the 1850s, international relations had been fluid, but the 20-year dominance of Bismarck after 1870 solidified allegiances and antipathies. Whilst reconciling Russia with a series of Reinsurance Treaties, Bismarck secured the international future of his newly founded Reich by means of forming a Triple Alliance in 1879-82 of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. This kept France, fundamentally unreconciled to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine in the 1870-71 Franco-Prussian War, in a state of isolation, as Britain stood aloof from European alliances. After Bismarck's dismissal in March 1890, the situation began to unravel, under the impulsive and destabilising influence of Kaiser Wilhelm II who fully intended to wield real power rather than allow free rein to his ministers. As Bismarck commented, the Kaiser was "like a balloon, if one did not hold him fast on a string, he would go no one knows whither", and in the 1890s there was no one to hold him fast.⁵⁰⁶ Consequently, the Reinsurance Treaties were allowed to lapse, giving France the opening to negotiate an Alliance with Russia over 1892-4, so that by 1898, the shifting nature of the international order symbolised by the deaths of Gladstone and Bismarck, there were three power blocs in contention-the Triple Alliance, the Dual Alliance and the British Empire.

Within French policymaking circles after 1871, two currents of thought arose. Those favouring a strategy directly centred on the challenge of, and recovery of the lost provinces from, the united and powerful Germany, were the continentalists. This

⁵⁰⁶ Remark by Bismarck to Munster, quoted by John Van Der Kiste, *Kaiser Wilhelm II Germany's Last Emperor* (Stroud, Sutton Publishing: 1999), 74.

tendency found most favour in the French Foreign Office, whereas the department run by the Undersecretary of Colonies was the centre of support for a colonialist strategy focussed on Empire outside of Europe. More colonies in Asia and Africa, enhancing France's position as a world power, might in the longer run enable the country to confront Germany more effectively on the continent.⁵⁰⁷ Mindful that such expansionism was encouraged by Bismarck, continentalists maintained that colonies were a distraction from what was or should be France's real objective. Although the 1890s saw France break out of its diplomatic isolation in Europe, a new wave of colonial acquisitions had been in progress for at least a decade. The rise of the colonialist current was signified by the foundation in 1890 of the Comité de l'Afrique Française, supported by Colonial undersecretary Eugene Etienne, the 1894 transformation of the Undersecretariat into a fully fledged ministerial post, and the demands new Undersecretary Théophile Delcassé made (and got accepted) in January 1893 that his department be transferred from within the Ministry of Marine to the Pavillon de Flore-new offices in the Louvre.⁵⁰⁸

The implications of the two currents for Anglo-French relations were plain for all to see. Colonial expansion was bound (as Bismarck surmised and hoped) to put France on a collision course at multiple points across the globe with the peripheries of the larger and more established British Empire, generating friction and rivalry that would readily seep back into both metropolises. Indeed, many involved in the enterprise of French colonialism positively welcomed the prospect of such conflict. In contrast, and if with reservations notably over Britain's non intervention in the Franco-Prussian War, the continentalists were more open to the idea of closer ties with Britain. Events in the 1890s - the relative rise of the colonial tide in Paris, the 1894 Russian alliance which

⁵⁰⁷ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 17 & Jean Baptiste Duroselle, *La France de la Belle Epoque* (Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques: 1992 2nd edition, 1972 1st edition), 247.

⁵⁰⁸ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 19, 18 & 24, and also Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 80.

lessened France's sense of isolation in Europe and, hence, need for British friendship on the continent - if anything militated even further in favour of government imaginings of Britain primarily as an actual, permanent, foe rather than a potential future friend. Some individuals, notably the French ambassador in London de Courcel, remained willing to countenance the idea of friendship with the British, but they were in a distinct and overruled minority.⁵⁰⁹

It fell to Delcassé, in 1898 as foreign minister, to deal with the difficulties created by the Fashoda Incident and the Boer War. Born on 1 March 1852 at Pamiers, in the Ariège about 70 miles from the border with Spain, Delcassé was 18 at the time of the Franco-Prussian war, memory of which remained close to his heart and reinforced an already strong sense of patriotism. In Paris from 1875, he progressed from teaching to journalism, after 1877 at *La Petite République* then in 1879 at *La République Française*. In 1884, he became secretary to the Ariège deputy Hugues Massip, whose daughter he married in October 1887 (thereby gaining financial independence), then made repeated attempts to be elected to the chamber. He finally became deputy in September 1889 for Foix, in Ariège. A Gambettist Republican, Delcassé enjoyed two stints from January-December 1893 and May 1894-January 1895 at what became the Ministry of Colonies.⁵¹⁰ Throughout his journalistic career, his main interest lay in colonial expansion and foreign affairs. In this connection, he showed little restraint in attacking Britain; His pamphlet *Alerte! Où allons nous?* (Paris, 1882) both protested against British occupation of Egypt and criticised Jules Ferry for the French indecision and inertia that had allowed that occupation to go ahead.⁵¹¹ His November 1890 maiden

⁵⁰⁹ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 109 & 112-113.

⁵¹⁰ Biographical information from Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), chapter 1, Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 75-7, and Charles Zorgbibe, *Théophile Delcassé Le Grand Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la IIIe République* (Paris, Editions Olbia: 2001), chapters 1-3.

⁵¹¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 21, Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 77 and Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 24 & 121.

speech in the chamber was “Une longue philippique contre la ‘Perfide Albion’”, focussing on Egypt and demanding more firmness in dealing with Britain.⁵¹²

Delcassé’s opposite number across the Channel was the very experienced Lord Salisbury, British Conservative Prime Minister for a third time following the June 1895 elections, and from then until October 1900 his own Foreign Minister. Opinions differ as to the ability of the British representative in Paris directly facing Delcassé, Sir Edmond Monson. Similar in age to Salisbury and with some 40 years of diplomatic service around the world behind him by the time he reached the Paris embassy in October 1896, according to the standard reference material of the 1920s, “Monson, calm and judicial by temperament, and grave and courteous in manner, avoided unnecessary irritation and was personally much liked by the French”.⁵¹³ Langer judged him “one of the most cautious and circumspect of diplomats”.⁵¹⁴ Later verdicts have been less kind. To Brown, Monson was “the sceptical and cautious British ambassador” who, in early 1898, had declined to subscribe to the dire forecasts of Munster and Tornielli about French domestic tumults shortly leading to a foreign war only then in late October 1898 to succumb to panic about France’s internal convulsions.⁵¹⁵ Grenville reflected upon the “misfortune that the most senior post in the British Diplomatic service was filled by a man of such mediocre abilities as Monson”, and, not without justification, Bates derided his “long-winded despatches”, which revealed too much readiness to take offence.⁵¹⁶ It is a reflection upon both the ambassador’s character and that of Delcassé that, after initial misgivings about the new Foreign Minister in June 1898, Monson should three

⁵¹² Zorgbibe, *Delcassé* (2001), 56, see also Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 9-10 and Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 79.

⁵¹³ Sir Sydney Lee (ed), *The Dictionary of National Biography*, supplement 1901-11 (Oxford University Press: 1920), 638.

⁵¹⁴ William Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism* (London, Alfred Knopf: 1935), 565.

⁵¹⁵ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 68-69, & John Charmley, *Splendid Isolation? Britain and the Balance of Power, 1874-1914* (London, Hodder & Stoughton: 1999), 268, extending Monson’s “alarmist” attitude in late October 1898 to the foreign support that Delcassé might enjoy in a war.

⁵¹⁶ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 429 & Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 155.

months later feel reason to reflect upon the calmness of Delcassé, which marked a significant contrast to the “petulance and hysterical sensibilities” displayed by his predecessor, Gabriel Hanotaux.⁵¹⁷ However, Monson’s unconcealed contempt for the instability of Third Republic governments and their politicians generally, and condescension towards “the little man” (mixed with some surprise that he should be believable) in particular, were unlikely to be helpful to the cause of Anglo-French harmony.⁵¹⁸

Policy making at the Quai d’Orsay at the Turn of the Century.

The structure of the Quai d’Orsay itself has been exhaustively and repeatedly analysed.⁵¹⁹ The constitutional position of the Minister was that he was accountable to the formal Head of State, the President of the Republic, and more immediately to the Président du Conseil (Prime Minister) who presided over the cabinet of which the minister was a part. Ministries changed with a frequency that was dizzying from the perspective of foreign and domestic critics, but tended to draw on one pool of the same individuals to fill its posts.⁵²⁰ Of all the ministries, that of Foreign Affairs seems to have been the one that enjoyed most stability.⁵²¹

In the Delcassé era, parliament was largely ignored. Deploring and fearing the consequences of leaks from colleagues motivated by domestic political gain, he frequently kept the Cabinet in the dark as to his plans, although this was not uncommon for all Foreign Ministers.⁵²² Successive Prime Ministers maintained Delcassé in office,

⁵¹⁷ Quoted by Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 145.

⁵¹⁸ Monson to Salisbury, 4 October 1898, quoted by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 91.

⁵¹⁹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 65-67, examined this in the particular context of Delcassé and Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), with an eye on the 1893-8 origins and outcome of Fashoda. Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), subsequently conducted extended analyses for their own sake covering longer periods of time. See Appendix 4 for more on Quai structure, and tables of politicians/diplomats.

⁵²⁰ Anderson, *France* (1977), 77.

⁵²¹ Anderson, *France* (1977), 78.

⁵²² Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 65, Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 16, and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 34.

either taking little interest in foreign affairs or expressing a confidence in him that was shared by Presidents Faure who rarely intervened, and Loubet, even more loath to participate in policymaking and completely confident in him.⁵²³

The bureaucrats of the Quai d'Orsay Centrale in Paris might have been expected to play a greater role in policymaking. In practice, their influence was limited by a Minister with firm ideas of his own. The Quai d'Orsay was still small enough for personality and personal attributes to play a more important role in shaping policies than machinery or sometimes theoretical lines of authority and subordination.⁵²⁴ Before 1905, little was done to reform a fundamentally old fashioned organisation that relied on personal contact and in which Delcassé was able both to bypass dissonant bureaucrats by simply taking on as much work himself as possible, and, over time, to place those he trusted most in the positions where they were able to support his policies. A case in point was the surprise appointment, as Political Director, of Gaston Raindre, whose support for France's religious Protectorate in the Levant strengthened Delcassé's pre-existing inclinations. Conversely, Raindre's contrary notions on other matters were simply ignored by the minister.

France's diplomats abroad were not much more influential. Some ambassadors, Delcassé simply did not trust, bypassing de Noailles by working through the Russian foreign minister and, unofficially, his own agent Jules Hansen when sounding out German intentions regarding the Boer War in October 1899, a move of which (according to Andrew) de Noailles was not even informed until March 1900.⁵²⁵ Delcassé's close collaboration with Jules Cambon in Madrid, after August 1902, contrasted strongly to

⁵²³ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 63-4 and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 32 & 30.

⁵²⁴ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 10 & 12-19.

⁵²⁵ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 160 & 165.

his dealing with Cambon's predecessor, Patenôtre.⁵²⁶ Much has been made of the independence of action of the elite ambassadorial triumvirate, namely Camille Barrère in Rome, Jules Cambon in Washington/Madrid and Paul Cambon in Constantinople/London, and the self important nature of both Cambon brothers.⁵²⁷ Delcassé, however, sharing the ambassadors' Gambettist inspiration, inclined to work with rather than in opposition to individuals who were evidently capable, loyal and in broad agreement with him on most policy issues, in an atmosphere of mutual friendship.⁵²⁸ Consequently, the differences that arose were only minor. Paul Cambon acknowledged the principle of parliamentary and ministerial control. He advised, cajoled and could bring pressure to bear, but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Delcassé decided policy on Britain and, had he so wished, he had sufficient strength of character to resist. In sum, Delcassé was responsible for broad outlines of policy, and kept either a strict control over others in the centrale or diplomatic corps, or ensured that their role was primarily one of filling in the details, or at best submitting ideas or initiatives for him to approve.

The Parti Colonial, "alone among all political groups in France at the close of the nineteenth century in having a serious interest in foreign affairs", was despite its small numbers potentially influential.⁵²⁹ After examining the extensive documentation of the Comité de l'Afrique Française, Brown asserted the decisive importance of the Parti Colonial in shaping French policy, structural weaknesses of the Third Republic making it "a happy hunting ground for the activities" of the pressure groups.⁵³⁰ Yet Delcassé's

⁵²⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 150-151, pointing to Delcassé keeping Patenôtre in ignorance of secret talks with Madrid about future spheres of interest in Morocco, and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 87. Jules Patenôtre was in post from 1897-1902- Zorgbibe, *Delcassé*, (2001), 380.

⁵²⁷ For example, Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 180, citing Paul Cambon's "considerable sense of his own importance" and bitter opposition to Hanotaux's policy towards the Ottoman Empire.

⁵²⁸ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 76-77.

⁵²⁹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 53.

⁵³⁰ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 6 & 138.

quarrel with Etienne (over Siam) furnished ample evidence that the Parti did not have things all their own way, and were unable to prevail if the minister was determined to disagree with their policies.⁵³¹

Historiography 1: The Old Views.

The two main achievements of Delcassé's period in office were the 1898-1902 rapprochement with Italy and the 1904 Entente Cordiale with Britain. The second of these, at the time a more radical departure and with hindsight of more lasting importance, has tended to command the greater attention amongst historians. The principal questions relate to when, precisely, Delcassé decided to endorse the idea of an alignment with Britain and the colonial barter at the centre of the Entente, and the extent if any to which others' influence induced him to this stance.

Much room was left for debate by the nature of the foreign minister's personality and working practices. He was universally agreed in childhood to have "acquired a habit of secrecy and self reliance which stayed with him throughout his public life".⁵³² His experience of confidential reports, written by him whilst Minister of Colonies, subsequently being published by his political opponents only served to exacerbate his pre-existing inclinations.⁵³³ With an eye on possible leaks to the press or directly to foreign powers from other politicians or his own officials Delcassé maintained an aversion to committing too much about his intentions to paper as Foreign Minister.⁵³⁴

⁵³¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 107-108.

⁵³² Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 1, CF. Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 185 "he worked almost entirely insulated from his colleagues", Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 4, "Delcassé had grown up from being an ugly, undersized, solitary, secretive and immensely clever boy into a squat, swarthy, solitary, secretive, industrious and immensely clever man who wore built up heels to boost his ego", and Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 83 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 60.

⁵³³ Charles Porter, *The Career of Théophile Delcassé* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press: 1936), 92.

⁵³⁴ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 11, highlights the example of the vast mass of the 25 carton Papiers Delcassé, the minister's supposedly personal papers, containing almost nothing written by him – only material collected by or sent to him.

Further, the Marchand-Fashoda files were personally weeded out by Delcassé in 1904.⁵³⁵ Often reliant on his memory of meetings with foreign diplomats rather than paper records, if dealing with ambassadors he preferred to talk directly to them when they happened to be in Paris, or orally by way of trusted intermediaries such as Paléologue.⁵³⁶ Contemporaries were well aware of this facet of Delcassé.⁵³⁷ The documentation on his inner thoughts could therefore never have been anything but incomplete, and left considerable scope for differing interpretations. Fashoda historians Brown and Sanderson opined that there was a near absence of 1890s evidence as to when or why Delcassé changed his mind about seeking friendlier relations with Britain.⁵³⁸

Viewed retrospectively, through the lenses of April 1904 and August 1914, the events of 1898-1902 might suggest an aberration. Delcassé himself later publicly asserted that he had wanted an alignment with Britain from the very start of his time in office.⁵³⁹ This was naturally echoed by “le pieux récit” of Albéric NeTON, characterised by Zorgbibe as Delcassé’s “fidèle secrétaire particulier”.⁵⁴⁰ Delcassé’s assertion was further articulated by the successive early French studies of Mévil, Pinon and Reynauld.⁵⁴¹ In the 1920s, G.P.Gooch agreed that Delcassé had concluded that “France had one enemy already, and

⁵³⁵ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Première série Tome xiv (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1957), (hereafter *DDF*, 1.xiv), ix & Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 11.

⁵³⁶ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 10 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 60, describing Delcassé’s “obsession with secrecy”.

⁵³⁷ E.G. Robert de Billy of his own cabinet “Only Proust could be as silent on what touched him deeply”, quoted by Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 11, and Monson in November 1900, writing to Lansdowne: “He is uncommunicative, not to say secretive... it is very rare that any of us succeeds in extracting information from him... he carries the practice of subterfuge to an extent which I have hardly ever met before in a Minister of Foreign Affairs”, quoted by Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 429-430.

⁵³⁸ G.N.Sanderson, *England, Europe and the Upper Nile, 1882-1899* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press: 1965), 207 & Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 124.

⁵³⁹ *Journal Officiel*, quoting a Delcassé speech of 24 January 1908, cited by Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 121.

⁵⁴⁰ Zorgbibe, *Delcassé* (2001), 97 & 117, alluding to Albéric NéTON, *Delcassé (1852-1923)* (Paris: 1952).

⁵⁴¹ André Mevil, *De la Paix de Frankfort à la conférence d’Algésiras* (Paris, Librairie Plon: 1909), 40, asserting that in view of German perfidy Delcassé had been determined in 1898-9 on a rapprochement with Britain despite the cost to French pride, René Pinon, *France et Allemagne, 1870-1913* (Paris, Perrin et Cie: 1913), 116, and Georges Reynauld, *La Diplomatie Française l’Oeuvre de M Delcassé* (Paris: 1915), 22.

she could not afford another. To quarrel with Great Britain was to play into the hands of Germany”, so confiding in 1898 his desire to stay at the Quai until “the bonne entente with England” was reached.⁵⁴² Elie Halévy added that in June 1898 Delcassé “had lost no time in showing his desire to restore friendly relations between France and England... compromised by the fault of his predecessor”.⁵⁴³

These views were backed by several later Anglophone accounts of his time in office, Eugene Anderson for example, relying on Delcassé’s repeated 1898-9 suggestions to Monson and Salisbury for “a cordial understanding between England, France and Russia” as evidence of his policy from the very start of his time in office.⁵⁴⁴ They persisted into the mid 1960s, in Herbert Tint’s assertion that Delcassé “got his priorities straight from the moment he took office”, having realised that see sawing between Berlin and London was neither intelligent nor feasible policy working systematically for an understanding with Britain throughout.⁵⁴⁵ Agreeing, Alfred Cobban stated that Delcassé was “already looking to Great Britain as a potential ally against Germany” as a means of explaining his unpopular concession over Fashoda.⁵⁴⁶ J.P.T.Bury’s assertion that Delcassé in 1898 “kept his head... and never lost sight of the fact that so long as the Germans continued to hold Strasbourg and Metz they were France’s only permanent enemy” was also consistent with this position.⁵⁴⁷ D.W.Brogan differed from this only slightly in contending that it was Fashoda that taught this “good Gambettist” his lesson,

⁵⁴² G.P.Gooch, *History of Modern Europe, 1878-1919* (London, Cassell & Company Ltd: 1923), 294.

⁵⁴³ E.Halévy, *History English People*, Vol 1 (1929), 60.

⁵⁴⁴ Eugene Anderson, *The First Moroccan Crisis 1904-6* (University of Chicago: 1930), 41, also Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 555 & 586, Porter, *Career of Delcassé* (1936), 165, stating “from the beginning of his career, Delcassé had worked for the rapprochement of England and France”.

⁵⁴⁵ Tint, *French Patriotism* (1964), 123.

⁵⁴⁶ Alfred Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, Vol 3, (London, Penguin Books: 1965), 94.

⁵⁴⁷ J.P.T.Bury, *France 1814-1940* (London, Methuen & Co: 1949), 208.

namely “the need not to let the reach exceed the grasp, to reach an agreement with the odious nation which had just won so brilliant a triumph over France”.⁵⁴⁸

Given the difficulty of reconciling a Delcassé desire for an alignment with Britain from June 1898 with events over the next 4 years, some however doubted that notion. E.M.Carroll interpreted Delcassé’s policy towards Britain as a simple product of his general lack of consistency, making him a man whose opinions changed with circumstances, “more of an opportunist than has been supposed”.⁵⁴⁹ To the mind of Frank Maloy Anderson, reviewing the newly published *Documents Diplomatique Français* for 1902-4, Delcassé was one of only several architects of the Entente “proceeding on their task in a hesitant and uncertain fashion”, with the absence of any documentary trace of “the large ideas (later) ascribed to them” pointing to a lack of those ideas amidst the detailed and determined haggling that preceded the agreement.⁵⁵⁰ These were only two of several approaches to the “traditional” Delcassé inspired view to be traced by Leaman, ranging from a complete endorsement of Delcassé’s line to the contention that he was not committed to an Entente until 1903, and then only under the sufferance of pressure from public opinion.⁵⁵¹ A.J.P.Taylor, conversely, re-asserted a form of the Delcassé line (if in contrast to Halévy) by interpreting Hanotaux and de Courcel’s 1894-5 negotiations as an early attempt to achieve an Entente, adding that by 1898 “every French politician of any sense knew that Egypt had been lost for good... Their ultimate object throughout was to restore the ‘Liberal Alliance’ with Great Britain”.⁵⁵² On this reading, Delcassé had “no great difference of principle” from his

⁵⁴⁸ D.W.Brogan, *The Development of Modern France (1870-1939)*, Book VI, (London, Hamish Hamilton: 1947), 326.

⁵⁴⁹ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), 171.

⁵⁵⁰ Frank Maloy Anderson, “Review of *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1871-1914*, 2nd series volumes II-IV” in *Journal of Modern History*, Vol 7.1 (March 1935), 87.

⁵⁵¹ Leaman, “Influence of Domestic Policy”, *Journal of Modern History*, Vol 14.4 (1942), 456-457.

⁵⁵² Taylor, “Prelude to Fashoda”, *English Historical Review* Vol 65 (1950), 52-80, and *The Struggle For Mastery in Europe* (Oxford, Clarendon Press: 1954), 380.

predecessor, if before Fashoda with “no clear cut plan except to improve France’s diplomatic position” and during the Boer War unwilling to capitalise on popular anti British feeling to intervene.⁵⁵³ The implication therefore is that Delcassé favoured an alignment with Britain, but that it took time for that general idea to crystallise into more practical proposals. Grenville agreed that de Courcel had in the mid 1890s wanted to establish a “bonne entente générale” but disagreed inasmuch as he saw the ambassador by 1896 being restrained by Paris.⁵⁵⁴ Grenville, further, perceived in Delcassé’s actions in 1900 genuine hostility, to the extent of “thinking in terms of a preventive war” against Britain based on the fear that an Anglo-French war would, after the defeat of the Boers, be next on Britain’s agenda.⁵⁵⁵

Historiography 2: After 1968.

The most drastic difference of recent opinion lies between Christopher Andrew, whose 1968 volume argued for a late conversion of Delcassé to the idea of an Entente, and Pascal Venier, working at Salford with J.F.V. Keiger.⁵⁵⁶ Andrew saw Delcassé, with his January 1893-January 1895 experiences at the Ministry of Colonies, as coming to the Quai in 1898 with no plans for alignment with France’s chief colonial rival Britain, and feelings that evolved into genuine antipathy during the Fashoda crisis.⁵⁵⁷ The order for Marchand’s withdrawal did not result in a complete or immediate dissipation of tensions, with the Minister of Marine still fearing a pre-emptive naval strike.⁵⁵⁸ Andrew noted Delcassé’s warmer communications with Germans in November-December 1898,

⁵⁵³ Taylor, *Struggle For Mastery* (1954), 380 & 387.

⁵⁵⁴ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 109 & 112-113.

⁵⁵⁵ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 271.

⁵⁵⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), Pascal Venier, “French Foreign Policy and the Boer War” in Keith Wilson, (ed), *The International Impact of the Boer War* (Chesham, Acumen: 2001), 65-78, and “Théophile Delcassé and the Question of Intervention in the Anglo-Boer War, October 1899-March 1900” in Philippe Chassaigne & Michael Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations 1898-1998 From Fashoda to Jospin* (Basingstoke, Palgrave: 2002), 44-55.

⁵⁵⁷ On Delcassé’s Anglophobe leanings and reputation at the colonial office, see Andrew & Kanya-Forstner, “French ‘Colonial Party’”, *Historical Journal*, Vol 14.1 (1971), 101-102, James J. Cooke, “Anglo-French Diplomacy and the Contraband Arms Trade in Colonial Africa, 1894-1897” in *African Studies Review*, Vol 17.1 (April 1974), 34-5, and Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 24.

⁵⁵⁸ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 111 & 112.

and fluctuating expectations in 1899 as various other Anglo-French disputes rumbled on.⁵⁵⁹ These culminated in Delcassé's August 1899 complaint to Monson about "the impossibility of keeping the relations with England on a friendly footing".⁵⁶⁰ If Delcassé's central aims remained both the colonisation of Morocco and ending British occupation of Egypt, it followed that Britain would be his opponent and Germany a potential supporter.⁵⁶¹ The onset of the Boer War afforded opportunities for international intervention for which, according to Andrew, Delcassé was genuinely enthusiastic, seeing in them the potential for re-opening the Egypt question.⁵⁶² German policy, meaning that any such "stand against England" could not be attempted, became a source of sincere regret.⁵⁶³ However, Delcassé was at the same time being urged to profit from Britain's temporary preoccupation, and did so in early 1900 in the seizure of Touat, an oasis in a remote inland area on the Algeria/Morocco border.⁵⁶⁴ 1901 having vexed Delcassé with British approaches to Germany for alliance, it was not until 1903, Andrew stated, that Delcassé inclined to take the first steps towards an Entente.⁵⁶⁵ This change of heart was due not least to pressure from the Parti Colonial, upon whom Andrew's later work concentrated.⁵⁶⁶

Venier suggests of subsequent literature on Delcassé's foreign policy that "Andrew's interpretation has generally been accepted for the past 30 years".⁵⁶⁷ Such was certainly

⁵⁵⁹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 112 & 114.

⁵⁶⁰ *BDW*, 1, 212, Monson to Salisbury, 14 August 1899, cited by Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), 116.

⁵⁶¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 138, 140 & 152 "Delcassé regarded England as the implacable enemy of his Moroccan policy".

⁵⁶² Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 158

⁵⁶³ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 164.

⁵⁶⁴ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 165-166.

⁵⁶⁵ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 178-179 & 110.

⁵⁶⁶ For example Christopher Andrew and A.S.Kanya-Forstner, "French 'Colonial Party'" *Historical Journal*, Vol 14.1 (March 1971), 99-128, "The Groupe Colonial in the French Chamber of Deputies, 1892-1932" in *The Historical Journal*, Vol 17.4 (December 1974), 837-866, and "French Business and the French Colonialists" in *The Historical Journal*, Vol 19.4 (December 1976), 981-1000, followed by their chronologically wider study *France Overseas the Great War and the Climax of French Imperial Expansion* (London, Thames & Hudson: 1981), notably at 23-54 covering the pre-1914 period.

⁵⁶⁷ Venier, "French Foreign Policy", Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 66.

the case for James McMillan, who emphasised the role of the Parti in persuading Delcassé in 1903 to come to terms with Britain.⁵⁶⁸ R.D.Anderson had also endorsed the ideas that Delcassé had been “not originally pro British”, and of the Parti Colonial changing its Anglophobe stance in light of Fashoda, to create the “late development” that was the Entente.⁵⁶⁹ Jamie Cockfield’s argument that, in the wake of Fashoda, there was a realistic chance that wiser German policymakers following a different course could have secured an alliance with France implicitly rested on Andrew’s reading of Delcassé’s policy.⁵⁷⁰ Keiger reiterated in 1983 Andrew’s view that it took until Spring 1903 for the Parti Colonial and Paul Cambon to convert Delcassé to the idea of the Egypt-Morocco barter at the centre of the later Anglo-French Entente.⁵⁷¹ However, eighteen years later, foreshadowing the work of his colleague Venier, Keiger had amended his position to the extent that he interpreted the March 1899 agreement as “a sign that Anglo-French differences were only skin deep”.⁵⁷² Overall, Keiger asserted, “the strategy of improved relations with Britain evolved slowly”, if under the urging of the comité de l’Afrique Française, from early 1899, with any animosity over Fashoda appearing “an aberration in relations between the two countries” rather than typical of that relationship.⁵⁷³

Elsewhere, variants of the traditional Delcassé view showed a surprising resilience. Despite being fully aware of Andrew’s work, P.J.V.Rollo asserted in 1969 that from before 1898 Delcassé “confessed to being haunted by the notion of an Anglo-French

⁵⁶⁸ James F.McMillan, *Twentieth Century France Politics and Society 1898-1991* (London, Edward Arnold: 1992), 42.

⁵⁶⁹ Anderson, *France* (1977), 149-150.

⁵⁷⁰ Jamie Cockfield, “Germany and the Fashoda Crisis, 1898-99” in *Central European History*, Vol 16.3 (September 1983), 256-275.

⁵⁷¹ Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 18.

⁵⁷² Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 165.

⁵⁷³ Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 164 & 165.

alliance. Its achievement was his mission".⁵⁷⁴ In his general survey of Belle Epoque France, Jean Baptiste Duroselle dated to February 1899 Delcassé's decision "à se rapprocher de l'Angleterre", if deferring any actual proposals until mid 1902, once the Boer War was over.⁵⁷⁵ According to Brown, in September 1898 Delcassé was "probably already dreaming of the day when Great Britain could be brought into the Franco-Russian alliance", if with contradictory indications over the winter of 1898-9 as he underwent a post Fashoda "sulk".⁵⁷⁶ David Levering Lewis endorsed Andrew to the extent that it had been Etienne and the Parti Colonial who "prodded" Delcassé towards rapprochement with Britain, but in a course embarked upon by him directly after Fashoda.⁵⁷⁷ Raymond Massie's attitude, from the same starting point as Pinon, Langer and Porter, was that Delcassé unambiguously worked towards an Entente from the time he arrived in office, external circumstances only forcing him and Cambon to play a waiting game until a more vigorous pursuit of a British alignment became possible in early 1902.⁵⁷⁸ Jacques Leygues' very sympathetic biography adhered to the line that in June 1898 one of Delcassé's 3 principal objectives was "négociier avec Londres afin de débayer le terrain des derniers malentendus", interpreting the March 1899 agreement as the real start of negotiations with Britain.⁵⁷⁹ The more dispassionate position of M.B.Hayne was that "his desire to achieve an Entente Cordiale stemmed from careful reflection during the years prior to his arrival in power", that Delcassé regarded Britain as a more effective counterbalance to Germany than Russia as well as "the key to France's aspirations in the Mediterranean", quite apart from any liberal-political affinity between the powers, and that "his basic attitude" of wanting a resolution of conflicts

⁵⁷⁴ Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 81.

⁵⁷⁵ Duroselle, *France Belle Epoque* (1972), 248 & 267.

⁵⁷⁶ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 85 & 123.

⁵⁷⁷ Lewis, *Race to Fashoda* (1988), 229.

⁵⁷⁸ Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 342-343.

⁵⁷⁹ Jacques Raphael Leygues, *Delcassé* (Paris, Encre Editions: 1980), 112-113, the other 2 aims being 1) "fortifier l'alliance russe" and 2) "persévérer dans l'amélioration des rapports avec l'Italie". Almost identical 1898 Delcassé aims were identified by Bell, *France and Britain* (1996), 24.

with Britain was consistent throughout.⁵⁸⁰ Rejecting any idea that the minister would have allied with Germany, Hayne concluded that circumstances alone had caused Delcassé to postpone any actual Anglo-French negotiations until 1903, and that, whatever outward appearances and flexibility he had had to display up to then, “revisionist attitudes need to be dismissed”.⁵⁸¹

Although Hayne directly attacked the Andrew interpretation, the most comprehensive critique of it nevertheless awaited Venier, whose 2001-2002 work perceives in the minister’s actions a lack of real hostility towards Britain, so paving the way for a later agreement. In the space of only 2 articles inevitably lacking the breadth of Andrew’s book, Venier concentrates on the period of the early Boer War, in a close analysis of the two attempts to form a continental coalition with the purpose of enforcing a peace upon Britain. Having emphasised the determination of French authorities in October 1899 “to refuse to follow any adventurous course and to stay aloof from any idea of a hostile intervention” and Delcassé going “probably as far as he could to promote a spirit of détente”, Venier re-interprets French incursions into Morocco from Algeria as the unauthorised actions of the men on the spot.⁵⁸² Further, the “degraded” state of French domestic political climate, the unpreparedness of the French navy and the prospect of the 1900 Exposition inhibited any “adventurous policy”.⁵⁸³ The later 28 February 1900 measures emphasised by Andrew were both purely defensive in nature and part of an already unfolding reform of military capacities, with the March 1900 diplomatic manoeuvrings seeing France follow the Russians only “with great caution”.⁵⁸⁴ Venier stresses both Delcassé’s attempt to involve the USA in the proposed intervention and the

⁵⁸⁰ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 100 & 101.

⁵⁸¹ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 102 & 100.

⁵⁸² Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 68, 69 & 70.

⁵⁸³ Venier, “Delcassé and Intervention” Chassaing Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 46.

⁵⁸⁴ Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 73 & 72.

friendly, humanitarian nature of what was planned.⁵⁸⁵ If anything, Delcassé had “a moderating influence on the Russian ally” and “may even have sought rapprochement with” Britain during the war.⁵⁸⁶

Of more recent studies, Dunlop draws on Porter to maintain that “To Delcassé, the arch-enemy was always Germany”, his “ultimate vision...triple alliance between France, Russia and England” as early as the 1880s, Zorgbibe and Clarke tend to back the Andrew argument, but Tombs endorses neither side.⁵⁸⁷ Despite Andrew’s critique of the Delcassé-inspired line that the minister had sought alignment with Britain from the very start of his time in office, or at least prior to the Boer War, it has never wholly disappeared. Venier’s work represents the most recent, cogent, published research on an important aspect of the problem, if, as he acknowledges, not covering the period after mid 1900 in any detail, so leaving unanswered questions for the ensuing 3 years.⁵⁸⁸

French Diplomacy in the Fashoda Crisis.

The first issue requiring consideration is what light Delcassé’s behaviour and utterances in the latter half of 1898 throws on his attitude towards Britain as he settled into office. The Niger negotiations having been completed by Hanotaux on 14 June, Delcassé’s main initial preoccupations were far removed from Britain. Successive notes from the Ministry of Colonies or Delcassé’s own department dated from 4 July to 4 September, seeking new instructions for the Marchand Mission, seem to have been ignored by the

⁵⁸⁵ Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 72 & 74 and Venier, “Delcassé and Intervention” Chassaing Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 51.

⁵⁸⁶ Venier, “Delcassé and Intervention” Chassaing Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 51 & 52.

⁵⁸⁷ Ian Dunlop, *Edward VII and the Entente Cordiale* (London, Constable Robinson: 2004), 89 & 95, Zorgbibe, *Delcassé* (2001) and Christopher Clarke, *The Sleepwalkers How Europe Went to War in 1914* (London, Penguin Books: 2013), 133-135; Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 431: “it is difficult to know precisely when he and other French decision-makers decided that a change of policy towards Britain would be advantageous”, CF. John M. Roberts, *Europe 1880-1945*, 2nd edition (London, Longman: 1989), 259: “Fashoda had not been a turning point: it merely removed the threat of an immediate conflict... It is still not clear with what intentions he took office as foreign minister in 1898”.

⁵⁸⁸ Venier, “Delcassé and Intervention” Chassaing Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 52.

Minister.⁵⁸⁹ His time was more absorbed first in the effort needed to mediate in the Spanish-American war, then, after 16 August, by a holiday in the Côte d'Azur.⁵⁹⁰ Two weeks later, new developments in the Dreyfus case compelled Delcassé not only to review his former belief in Dreyfus' guilt but divert energy into reconciling still anti Dreyfusard war minister Cavaignac with now revisionist Prime Minister Brisson, to shore up the latter's tottering grasp on office.⁵⁹¹ By 1 September, Delcassé had the additional irritant of his supposed ally Nicholas II, without first troubling to consult or even inform the French, airing a proposal for a Conference directed towards international disarmament.⁵⁹² The confessed bewilderment of French public opinion (and, Monson correctly suspected, Delcassé himself) at the Tsar springing this unexpected idea was what provided the context for the ambassador's report that Delcassé claimed that "every difficulty between England and France could by patience and by a conciliatory spirit be peaceably solved"; further, that he considered "eminently desirable a cordial understanding between England, France and Russia".⁵⁹³

Bates saw the delay in dealing with the Colonial Ministry, and the non committal reply that Delcassé did eventually render on 7 September, as part of the same devious ploy to cover up his own volte-face.⁵⁹⁴ But perhaps Wright's reflection that "The long interval gives the impression that he was hoping Marchand would not succeed" was nearer the mark.⁵⁹⁵ The timing of the reply was unlikely to have been a coincidence. News of Kitchener's success at Omdurman, which made the possibility of an Anglo-French collision on the Upper Nile into a near inevitability, had reached Paris on 6 September.

⁵⁸⁹ *DDF*, 1.xiv, various to Delcassé, 4 & 18 July, 19 & 23 August and 4 September 1898, 363, 386-9, 463, 474 & 509, Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 91-92 and Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 84.

⁵⁹⁰ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 78-79.

⁵⁹¹ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 80-82: Colonel Henry was arrested on 30 August for having forged documents upon which the original Dreyfus conviction was based.

⁵⁹² Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 327.

⁵⁹³ *National Archives*, FO 27/3396.431, Monson to Salisbury, 1 September 1898.

⁵⁹⁴ *DDF*, 1.xiv, 515-517, Delcassé to Trouillot, 7 September, and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 143.

⁵⁹⁵ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 185.

Up until that point, there had been the chance that stronger Mahdist opposition might defer, or altogether stop, the advance of the Anglo-Egyptians, so making cogitations on Marchand, in any case at the end of tenuous and lengthy lines of communication, of academic interest only. There remained the possibilities that Marchand had been pushed back/killed by the Mahdists, or had failed to reach Fashoda. Delcassé's response to the Ministry of Colonies expressed the hope that Marchand, instead of moving onto Fashoda, might have gone no further north than the junction of the Nile with the Sobat.⁵⁹⁶ However, failing this, the minister now almost certainly had to face up to a confrontation in the very near future, and was left with no option but to start preparing for it, meanwhile still having to cope with the domestic complications and the cabinet instability generated by the Dreyfus case.⁵⁹⁷

Delcassé was handicapped by the lack of prior diplomatic preparation for a confrontation on the Upper Nile on the part of his predecessor.⁵⁹⁸ Hanotaux's apologia, in *Fachoda*, maintained that had he stayed in office he - unlike Delcassé - would have responded favourably to German overtures (the Munster note) for a possible future carve up of Portugal's African possessions, and that this would have sufficed to secure German support against Britain.⁵⁹⁹ Instead, Germany reached agreement on the same subject with Britain, but even had either Hanotaux or Delcassé not considered it impossible to deal with Munster there was no guarantee that German co-operation on the Upper Nile would have followed.⁶⁰⁰ Germany, like Italy, had in the early 1890s voluntarily signed away any pretensions of her own in this region in return for

⁵⁹⁶ DDF, 1.xiv, 516, Delcassé to Trouillot, 7 September.

⁵⁹⁷ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 88, quoting Delcassé on 14 September "I had no need for the distraction of the Dreyfus affair. It's so sad!"

⁵⁹⁸ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 75-77.

⁵⁹⁹ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 76

⁶⁰⁰ *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, Vol 14(1) (Berlin, DeutscheVerlags Gesellschaft: 1924), 347-355, containing the text of the Balfour-Hatzfeldt Convention of 30 August 1898 on Portugal and its colonies.

concessions elsewhere. Likewise, the Russians, unimpressed by French lack of support for their expansions in the Far East, were sufficiently assuaged by British behaviour not to offer France more than verbal support on the Upper Nile.⁶⁰¹

Delcassé's first instinctive response to the possibility of a clash on the Upper Nile was to play down the significance of the mission, and therefore, it might be hoped, the tension consequent on its presence at Fashoda. Hence, Marchand was initially written off to Monson as "nothing but an emissary of civilisation" with no authority to decide the questions of right that lay with the governments in Paris and London.⁶⁰² Delcassé further aired the hope that "all outstanding differences between the two countries might be amiably arranged by the exercise of patience and conciliation".⁶⁰³ In the first stage of the crisis, Delcassé certainly seems to have been sincere enough in his anxiety about an armed conflict between Kitchener and Marchand, and relieved when it emerged that there had been none.⁶⁰⁴ Once it had been ascertained that both sides had abstained from fighting, he was faced with the question of how, if at all, advantage could be taken of the French presence on the Nile without resort to war. Relief over the lack of violence melded seamlessly on 28 September into expansive statements reported by Monson about future prospects for Anglo-French relations, as Delcassé "reiterated that it is the desire of the present French government to make a friend of England, adding that between ourselves he would much prefer an Anglo-French to an [sic] Franco-Russian

⁶⁰¹ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 75.

⁶⁰² BDW, 1, 163, Monson to Salisbury, 8 September, echoing DDF 1, xiv, 521, Delcassé to Londres/Caire, 8 September, with both men fighting "contre la barbarie au profit de la civilisation".

⁶⁰³ BDW, 1, 163, Monson to Salisbury, 8 September.

⁶⁰⁴ See for example DDF 1, xiv, 539-540, Delcassé to Lefèvre-Pontalis (Cairo), 11 September, anxiously enquiring from the French agent as to the credibility of a Havas report forecasting that Kitchener would attack any white troops found at Fashoda, and DDF 1, xiv, 585, Delcassé to Geoffroy, 26 September & Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 341, alluding to his relief on learning that there had been no shooting when Kitchener met Marchand at Fashoda.

alliance”.⁶⁰⁵ Delcassé’s own record of their dialogue, stating that “j’ai constaté de nouveau l’esprit d’entente dont on paraissait également animé des deux côtés”, did not go quite as far, because this “esprit d’entente” was explicitly stated as a context for resolution of the immediate problem, i.e. as a background enabling the French “à ne pas nous refuser à certaines concessions, si nous les jugions possibles”.⁶⁰⁶

Delcassé’s own note, covering his next meeting with Monson on 30 September, whilst leaving a wide scope for conciliation, clearly asserted the limits of his own willingness for co-operation:

Il ne faut pas que le gouvernement de la reine se méprenne sur mon désir d’entente avec l’Angleterre, dont vous avez vous-même reconnu le sincérité, ni sur mes sentiments conciliants... Je puis faire à l’entente franco-anglaise le sacrifice d’intérêts matériels: dans mes mains, l’honneur national restera intact. Nul autre, à cette place, ne vous tiendra un autre langage...⁶⁰⁷

This time, the more reserved account came from the British side, Monson making less of French goodwill than Delcassé’s unofficial declaration that “it is impossible for the French government to give up Fashoda... France would, however unwillingly, accept war rather than submit”.⁶⁰⁸ Underlining the essentially confrontational nature of his ongoing engagement with Monson, Andrew made the further point that faulty intelligence had misled Delcassé into expecting a British ultimatum at this meeting, hence the minister’s “impassioned plea for an honourable settlement”, and subsequent optimism when Monson did not deliver the ultimatum that he did not in fact have.⁶⁰⁹

⁶⁰⁵ *BDW*, 1, 163, Monson to Salisbury, 28 September. A variant on the France-Russia-Britain combination reportedly aired on 1 September, this remark should also be interpreted in light of that conversation and Russian (mis)handling of the Tsar’s proposed disarmament conference.

⁶⁰⁶ *DDF* 1, xiv, 595, Delcassé to Geoffray, 28 September.

⁶⁰⁷ *DDF* 1, xiv, 612, Note du Ministre, 30 September. Delcassé’s perception that he had shown “toute la modération possible et un esprit de conciliation” up to the limit allowed by national honour was reiterated in his correspondence to the embassy in London- *DDF* 1, xiv, 624, Delcassé to Geoffray, 3 October-and his wife in similar terms to his Note-*MAE*, Delcassé manuscripts, Delcassé to wife, translated by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 99: “Her Majesty’s Government must make no mistake about my desire for an understanding with England... Whilst I may sacrifice material interests...”

⁶⁰⁸ *BDW*, 1, 172, Monson to Salisbury, 30 September.

⁶⁰⁹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 99-100.

Pending receipt of Marchand's report by the French government, for the time being reliant solely upon telegrams from Kitchener via London for news of their own Mission, Delcassé persisted in attempting to wring concessions from Britain. Baron de Courcel, on leave in Paris, was sent back to London with instructions to negotiate on the basis of a withdrawal of Marchand in return for other territorial concessions.⁶¹⁰ Despite denials from the British press and politicians that the dialogue started prior to the withdrawal constituted negotiations, elsewhere it was commonly recognised to amount to just that.⁶¹¹ By 11 October, Delcassé confessed to Monson that "he was sick of telling me that he is sincerely anxious to avoid a rupture... knowledge of his friendly disposition towards us is injuring his position here".⁶¹² Again, this remark should be interpreted in its immediate context-with the underlying aim of forcing concessions in Africa under the threat that Delcassé might otherwise have to resign over Fashoda, and any minister replacing him would be less agreeable to Britain. So expressions of goodwill served as a lever for Delcassé to avoid the choice of resignation, "humiliation... which he personally cannot accept" or "a war with England... alike contrary to his avowed policy and repulsive to his principles".⁶¹³

The turning points in the crisis were, though, played out across the Channel. British press coverage on Fashoda was complemented by increasingly uncompromising speeches from British statesmen, inspired by Salisbury's release of a Blue Book.⁶¹⁴ Spanning the political spectrum, Chancellor of the Exchequer Hicks Beach through Liberal leaders Rosebery and Grey, to Asquith, and Harcourt on the left, lined up after

⁶¹⁰ DDF 1, xiv, 629-631, Delcassé to Courcel, 4 October.

⁶¹¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 100-101 & Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 153.

⁶¹² BDW, 1, 179, Monson to Salisbury, 11 October.

⁶¹³ BDW, 1, 186, Monson to Salisbury, 29 October.

⁶¹⁴ Prompted by the public revelations in the French press inspired by Delcassé's Ministry of Colonies colleague (and rival) Trouillot, who was disinclined to compromise with Britain, the British Blue book issued on 10 October, with a supplement on 23 October, represented a departure from normal practice, and was therefore contentious, inasmuch as the British had not waited to publish documents until after the diplomatic dispute had been resolved- Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 97-98.

11 October to declare British resolve, so decreasing any inclination to concede on the part of public opinion or those in government who might otherwise waver.⁶¹⁵ When Courcel met Lord Salisbury on 12 October, a long discussion ensued. The very different understandings of their conversation became painfully apparent when Courcel's subsequent letter to Salisbury, claiming that concession of territory as an outlet for the Congo as far as the left bank of the Nile had been considered, met with a prompt and firm disavowal from Salisbury, not only refusing the validity of such pretensions but stating "The claim asserted... is quite new to me, and, as far as I know, has never been officially made on behalf of the French government".⁶¹⁶ Delcassé's nerves, already tried by repeated reports from Britain of naval and military preparations for war, were not helped by ambiguous despatches from Marchand. If anything, the situation was worsened by the arrival in France on 26 October of Marchand's subordinate Baratier, who travelled up to Paris to a hero's welcome and, failing to affirm that the mission was in the state of desperation and disease portrayed by Kitchener, did not scruple to stir up trouble for the government amongst the colonialist lobby until ordered to return to Fashoda.⁶¹⁷

As Delcassé's hopes for what he might be able to negotiate out of the British in return for Fashoda diminished, so also did his inclination to air generalised opinions on the future of Anglo-French relations. Both had clearly rested on "le ton très amical et très conciliant" perceived, particularly in Salisbury, by Courcel and Delcassé.⁶¹⁸ In view of the intransigence of the British Cabinet meeting on 27 October, such assertions had ceased to carry any value as a lubricant to negotiating, because there was to be no

⁶¹⁵ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 347-8 & Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 154-155.

⁶¹⁶ *BDW*, 1, 180, Courcel to Salisbury, 12 October, and Salisbury to Courcel, 13 October in what Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 156, characterised as "a letter of frigid Englishness" as "prospects for a negotiated settlement dimmed" - Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 101.

⁶¹⁷ Sanderson, *Upper Nile*, (1965), 353, Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 114 & Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 149-51 & 159.

⁶¹⁸ *DDF* 1, xiv, 640, Delcassé to Courcel, 8 October.

further negotiation until Marchand had been withdrawn. Delcassé and Courcel hesitantly tried to seek a face-saving formula whereby a Commission Mixte to determine territorial borders might be appointed simultaneously with Marchand being told to evacuate, but to no avail.⁶¹⁹ Even ordering the withdrawal on 3 November failed to prompt the immediate negotiations for which Courcel had pressed. The Prime Minister maintained that these were neither possible nor desirable until such time as “historical and geographical information which we do not fully possess” had been acquired, and “l’état des esprits dans les deux pays” had calmed.⁶²⁰

Advocates of the Delcassé line have cited his 1898 declaration that “je ne voudrais pas quitter ce fauteuil sans avoir rétabli la bonne entente avec l’Angleterre”.⁶²¹ Even Andrew allowed the claim that the minister already had an Entente with Britain in mind at the time of Fashoda, citing his private correspondence of 6 and 7 October 1898, in which Delcassé owned up to “the desire for an agreement with England, very freely expressed by me since I became foreign minister”.⁶²² It was not surprising that among those on the receiving end of such ideas was British ambassador Monson during September and early October 1898, as an attitude of conciliation was the most sensible one for any French Foreign Minister to take in the circumstances.⁶²³ However, all of the statements to Monson should be read in the context of the vigorous arguments between the Minister and Ambassador as to who had the right to ownership of Fashoda, something readily acknowledged by the Briton as “His Excellency remained as

⁶¹⁹ *DDF* 1, xiv, 725-6, 738, 746-749, Delcassé to Courcel, 29 & 30 October, Courcel to Delcassé 1 November.

⁶²⁰ *BDW*, 1, 187, Monson to Salisbury, 30 October and *DDF* 1, xiv, 760, Courcel to Delcassé to Courcel, 4 November, cf. same to same, 763, 5 November & 782, 10 November, and Salisbury to Devonshire, 7 November, “We must make a serious effort to ascertain what territories were under the Khedive, and what were under the Khalifa... and also some reliable account of the watershed between the Nile and Congo”, quoted by Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 231.

⁶²¹ Quoted by René Pinon, *France et Allemagne* (1913), 116, Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 555, Porter, *Career of Delcassé* (1936), 165 and Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 342.

⁶²² Archives of *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*, Delcassé manuscripts, Delcassé to wife, translated by Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), 91, cf. Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 122.

⁶²³ Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 556.

determined as ever upon the right of France to occupy territory practically abandoned by Egypt and contested the right of Great Britain to warn off other powers".⁶²⁴ An abstract and generalised desire for an agreement might be one thing, but a consistent and coherent resolve for, or master plan to work towards, an alliance would be another altogether, and cannot reasonably be extrapolated from Delcassé's behaviour and utterances of the moment during the crisis.

Taking into account the nature of the Fashoda incident, it might seem paradoxical that in late 1898 anyone in the Quai should be contemplating friendly overtures to Britain. Such a hypothesis hangs not on the substantive outcome of Fashoda. Delcassé had accepted by 7 September that Etienne's idea of using Marchand as a means of reopening the question of Egypt, or even making substantial territorial gains, was impracticable.⁶²⁵ In the absence of any concessions from Salisbury, by mid October, he noted that France was "absolutely incapable of carrying on, even with Russian help" a war at sea against Britain, and that an unconditional withdrawal, as the only alternative, might have to be ordered.⁶²⁶ Delcassé knew, as did British policymakers, that most of the Russian fleet, based in the Baltic, would be immobilised in port from November until April.⁶²⁷ The withdrawal, the French acceptance that they were not to have an outlet on the Upper Nile, still less an opportunity to overturn British control of Egypt, and a subsequent negotiation of a boundary between British and French spheres of influence in eastern Africa, were all foreseeable. They followed from the defeat of the Khalifa and meeting of Kitchener and Marchand, the failure of any supporting French/Abyssinian expedition from the east to reach Fashoda via the lands of the fickle Menelick, and the

⁶²⁴ *BDW*, 1, 163, Monson to Salisbury, 28 September.

⁶²⁵ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 92 & 119 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 152-153.

⁶²⁶ *MAE*, Delcassé manuscripts, Delcassé to wife, 22 & 24 October 1898, cited by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 102 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 158, & Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 348.

⁶²⁷ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 355. See *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, Vol 14(2) (Berlin, DeutscheVerlags Gesellschaft: 1924), 388, Metternich to Richtofen, 6 November, advising Chamberlain's awareness of this limitation to the Russian Navy's effectiveness.

disproportion of strength at Fashoda and globally. Then there was the realisation in Paris from Marchand's own reports that the upper Nile had neither much commercial potential nor any viable port sites, so dictating a pragmatic conclusion to the crisis.⁶²⁸ Even if these factors had not, Brown makes the point that Delcassé's freedom of action was severely prescribed by domestic factors, in particular divisions arising from the Dreyfus affair which exacerbated industrial disputes and threatened ministerial crises or even perhaps an overthrow of the Republic, and the collapse of the Brisson cabinet on 25-6 October, which at a crucial juncture left Delcassé as a temporary caretaker minister.⁶²⁹

In the early stages of the crisis, although the British maintained that they would not negotiate, the talks that went on pending Delcassé's receipt of news from Baratier and Marchand amounted to negotiations. Even in mid-October, when the British tone was stiffening and the crucial Salisbury-Courcel misunderstanding had taken place, London had the option, whilst insisting on the evacuation of Marchand in reality before any negotiations, of not imposing what from the French side would be viewed as a humiliation. The ambassador went so far as to report of Delcassé that "that if we would make things easy for him in form he would be conciliatory in substance"; where Delcassé had real cause for grievance was in the refusal of the British Prime Minister, after cabinet on 27 October, to offer him anything at all along the lines of the face-saving "golden bridge for that retrograde movement" to which Monson referred.⁶³⁰

Post-Fashoda Diplomacy.

It seems quite possible that, without the urging of Faure, Delcassé could well have availed himself of the opportunity presented by the Brisson cabinet collapse to relinquish the Quai d'Orsay, so avoiding personal responsibility for ordering Marchand

⁶²⁸ For example, *DDF* 1, xiv, 709-710, Courcel to Delcassé, 26 October, of Fashoda citing "la valeur absolument nulle de ce poste pour nos territoires" and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 161 & 181.

⁶²⁹ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 126-131.

⁶³⁰ *BDW*, 1, 179, Monson to Salisbury, 11 October.

to leave Fashoda.⁶³¹ That he returned to office under Dupuy on 1 November and accepted the humiliation cost Delcassé political capital to an extent that would be hard to reconcile with a sustained enthusiasm for Britain. Faure's later assessment was that "Cette décision... coûtait beaucoup, tous ses amis étant du parti Chauvin et lui - même ayant toujours eu une attitude très ardente".⁶³² Monson also recognised the cost to Delcassé of staying in office, now he was exposed to "a certain loss of popularity" and "the disagreeable experience of defending in the tribune the policy".⁶³³ Hayne, accepting that the foreign minister felt personally aggrieved at the way he had been treated by the British, advises more bluntly that Delcassé in some circles subsequently became known as "the gnome of Fashoda".⁶³⁴

Orders for the withdrawal of Marchand served to relieve much, but by no means all, of the tension in relations between Britain and France. In the immediate wake of Fashoda, Monson reported that:

There is no doubt that this country had been intimidated by the attitude of England... France appears to me to be staggered; and in consequence calls herself humiliated. I should like to think that the feeling of resentment will be transitory; but the contrary is, I fear, the more likely.⁶³⁵

The French wondered why the British continued to maintain their fleet on the war footing that it had by early November achieved. German diplomats (excepting Hatzfeldt) remained convinced of the ultimate inevitability of the Anglo-French war that the Kaiser discretely continued to encourage until February 1899.⁶³⁶ Monson reported French

⁶³¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 101.

⁶³² Félix Faure, quoted by Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 353.

⁶³³ *BDW*, 1, 189, Monson to Salisbury, 4 November.

⁶³⁴ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 58.

⁶³⁵ *NA*, FO 27/3397.598, Monson to Salisbury, 11 November 1898, cf. same to same, 11 November, "I think I may say that you have established a funk here", quoted by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 111.

⁶³⁶ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 363, Cockfield, "Germany and Fashoda" *Central European History*, Vol 16.3 (September 1983), 263-264, Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 256 & Roderick Mclean, "The Kaiser's Diplomacy and the Reconquest of the Sudan", in Edward Spiers (ed), *Sudan the Reconquest Reappraised* (London, Frank Cass: 1998), 151-154. Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 79, relays that when the Kaiser later "claimed to be 'like a man with a pail of water', trying to put out the Anglo-French fire over

“apprehension... that England is looking out for a pretext for declaring war against France”, originating in the conviction, in government and legislative circles among others, that the British “are of the opinion that it is folly to allow France to have leisure to increase her naval strength, and to secure still further sympathy, if not chances of support, from Continental Powers”.⁶³⁷ Such warlike preparations, if in an unfortunate conjunction with continued inflammatory speeches from Chamberlain, have been explained away in terms of a desire to intimidate into silence any continental power otherwise tempted to object to the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement determining how the Sudan would in future be governed.⁶³⁸ Salisbury and Cromer, determined to avoid replicating the situation in Egypt itself, whereby the French and Russian delegates could obstruct British proposals on the Caisse de la Dette, and the Wilhelmstrasse could blackmail Britain into securing the co-operation of the German and Austrian delegates, imposed a Condominium Agreement whereby the Khedive’s authority over Sudan was reduced to nothing more than a ghostly shadow, with Britain running the province largely in form as well as in practice.⁶³⁹ Sanderson makes a convincing case for “a very close and surely significant connection in time” between the final signing and promulgation of this after 19 January 1899, and the start of British demobilisation a few days later.⁶⁴⁰ Given Russian distance from or disinterest in Egypt for its own sake, Italian reliance on British support in Africa, and German desire to stoke up Anglo-French conflict, his suggestion that the naval preparations were not primarily directed against France, and correctly understood at the time to be directed as such, is somewhat less convincing. Persisting Anglo-French tensions were further exacerbated by

Fashoda,” the then Foreign Office Permanent Secretary “remarked acidly that he was more like ‘someone running about with a Lucifer match and scratching it against the powder barrels.’”

⁶³⁷ NA, FO 27/3398.689, Monson to Salisbury, 16 December 1898.

⁶³⁸ On Chamberlain’s 15 November speech, see *DDF* 1, xiv, 808, Geoffray to Delcassé, 16 November, particularising Chamberlain’s demands for French colonial concessions to the British if France wanted good relations and emphasising his influence on the British cabinet and public opinion.

⁶³⁹ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 366-367.

⁶⁴⁰ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 366.

Monson's own gaffe. Criticisms in his speech on 6 December to the British Chamber of Commerce of the "pin-pricking" against British colonial policy practiced by short lived French ministries for their "ephemeral gratification", and of the "intemperate language" used in some parts of the French press, invited allegations from the Chamber of Deputies and the press that the Ambassador was interfering in French internal politics.⁶⁴¹

Simultaneously engaging in prolonged negotiations over an exit route for Marchand, whose expedition finally left Fashoda on 13 December and travelled back via Abyssinia and Djibouti, the Quai d'Orsay's response to the overall situation was two fold.⁶⁴² Complementing French defensive naval preparations, Delcassé sought to avoid giving any provocations to Britain. In an interview to Russian paper *Rossia*, in December, he admitted the possibility of Britain desiring "war in order to destroy our own fleet before it became even stronger than it is now. But such a war is not as easy to make as one imagines. A war like that is never made without a pretext, and we shall never supply a pretext".⁶⁴³ This interview also pointed his second line of action, to suggest that other continental countries would in the event of war rally to France's support. In his talks with Monson, Delcassé hoped to deter any attack by warning that "if France had to go to war with England, she would not consider that it would be enough to have the support of Russia alone, but that she would seek for and obtain that of Germany also".⁶⁴⁴

Such threats should have been given added plausibility by relations between Delcassé and German contacts. Andrew cited at length the report of German agent Arthur Von

⁶⁴¹ Lee (ed), *Dictionary of National Biography*, supplement (1920), 638, *BDW*, 1, 194-5, Monson to Salisbury, 8 December 1898 and *DDF* 1, xiv, 863-866, Delcassé to Cambon & Cambon to Delcassé, 8 & 10 December, relaying Monson's protestations that he had had no desire to interfere, and the publicly muted reactions to the speech in the London government.

⁶⁴² Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 202-206 & Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 162-175. There were also negotiations for the proposed sale of Marchand's steam boat *Faidherbe* to the British- *DDF* 1, xiv, 839-841, Monson to Delcassé, 29 November & Guillaumin to Delcassé, 30 November.

⁶⁴³ Quoted by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 117-118.

⁶⁴⁴ *BDW*, 1, 196, Monson to Salisbury, 9 December.

Huhn, advising the Wilhelmstrasse of his meeting in early December with Delcassé in which the latter “indicated a rapprochement with Germany as an aim to be pursued by all means” for “a common policy against English encroachments”.⁶⁴⁵ At face value, such sentiments appear damning for the later Delcassé line, but it is equally possible to interpret these strictly unofficial feelers to a German journalist as a superficial show, or nothing more than “a tactical move designed to make the British think twice before launching a preventive war”.⁶⁴⁶ In mid December, Monson put the “curious” phenomenon of “the court now being paid to Germany by a portion of the French press, and probably also by the French government” down to motives other than a desire for an anti British diplomatic combination. The easing of Franco-German tensions would enable both sides to effect reductions in their armies, in the French case now “grown into such vast and ponderous proportions as to threaten the existence of those constitutional liberties which are dear to the great majority of Frenchmen”. If the French were eager to save money and stabilise the democracy of their Republic, the Kaiser might welcome the opportunity for reductions in light of his fears about “the spread of Socialistic doctrines” among his subjects.⁶⁴⁷ Whilst Monson owned that such improvements in Franco-German relations would not enhance Britain’s position, it is therefore apparent that they were presently not deemed inconsistent either with British goodwill towards France, or vice versa. By this time, however, Munster, of the opinion a month earlier that Britain had become more hated in France than Germany had ever been, had already concluded that a Franco-German alignment would be impossible. The insuperable obstacles were the “quite remarkably impractical ideas” still harboured in

⁶⁴⁵ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 112.

⁶⁴⁶ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 378, CF. Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 123, characterising Delcassé’s December 1898 hints to Monson about Germany as no more than “a tactical response to...a dangerous situation”, and Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 576 writing off Franco-German reconciliation in 1898-9 as “hardly more than extravagant fancies”.

⁶⁴⁷ NA, FO 27/3398.689, Monson to Salisbury, 16 December 1898.

France, on wresting Alsace-Lorraine from German control.⁶⁴⁸ This had been an awkward subject for Delcassé, who had largely skirted around it in conversation with Von Huhn rather than trying to confront it.⁶⁴⁹

The ambiguity of the motives behind Delcassé's overture to Berlin is reflected in the contradictory evidence about the tone of Anglo-French relations after Fashoda. Meeting the new Dupuy government, Monson remarked that "I could not but be struck with the courtesy, and I may say cordiality, displayed in every instance by the Ministers, and by their professed desire to be on the best of terms with England".⁶⁵⁰ Even whilst the war scare persisted, there was cordiality shown during the visit to Paris of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall without "anything disagreeable or disobliging said of England" nor, Monson noted, any deliberate hostility subsequently, for "the bulk of the French nation had no such feeling towards England".⁶⁵¹ The willingness of Delcassé to advise on how to "put a stop to all further trouble and to the proposed parliamentary question" excited by Monson's Chamber of Commerce speech was relayed by the ambassador to London.⁶⁵² Perhaps most importantly of all, Delcassé had chosen Paul Cambon for the London embassy in the knowledge that Paul had been an advocate of closer Anglo-French links since at least 1888, during an embassy in Madrid that left him with the feeling that British influence was needed to counter German in the Mediterranean, a sentiment enhanced still further by the convergence of British and French interests, as against those of Russia, in the Ottoman Empire during his tenure in Constantinople.⁶⁵³ That the appointment was in mid September explicitly proposed to Monson on the basis

⁶⁴⁸ Quoted by Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 378.

⁶⁴⁹ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 378 & Cockfield, "Germany and Fashoda" *Central European History*, Vol 16.3 (September 1983), 268-269.

⁶⁵⁰ *BDW*, 1, 190, Monson to Salisbury, 8 November.

⁶⁵¹ *NA*, FO 27/3398.647, Monson to Salisbury, 27 November & 675, 8 December 1898.

⁶⁵² *BDW*, 1, 195, Monson to Salisbury, 8 December 1898.

⁶⁵³ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 103. On Cambon co-operating with Currie in Constantinople, against Russia, see for example Keith Eubank, *Paul Cambon, Master Diplomatist* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press: 1960), 51-53 & 57 and Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 44-45.

of “the character and disposition of M Cambon, who is well known as being a friend to England” might, again, be interpreted as Delcassé seeking to create an amiable ambience in which the British might be more amenable to negotiations over the Upper Nile.⁶⁵⁴ Such conciliatory impressions persisted though into the post Fashoda period. Monson relayed that Cambon went “empowered to propose... that all outstanding questions in dispute between England and France should be dealt with as much as possible simultaneously, and a general arrangement come to for a comprehensive settlement”.⁶⁵⁵ To his mind, this was evidence of the sincerity of Faure, Delcassé and their colleagues for more cordial relations, although, as Andrew related, any expectations of important discussions immediately following Cambon’s arrival in London were not met.⁶⁵⁶

The end of 1898 found Cambon reflecting on the courtesy with which he had been received in London, and the hostility to war of the Queen, Balfour and Salisbury, but also the Prime Minister’s failure to capitalise on French conciliatory intentions and the power of certain “influences belliqueuses” incessantly at work. Mindful of the clear and categorical opinions of the naval and military attachés that Britain was ready for war and awaited only “le premier prétexte pour nous surprendre”, Cambon concluded that, despite some pacific currents within the Liberal party, “Nous sommes donc en face d’un danger plus ou moins prochain, plus ou moins éventuel, mais qu’il est impossible de nier”.⁶⁵⁷ On the British side, Salisbury’s pessimistic assessment for Anglo-French relations was that “a mutual temper of apathetic tolerance may be cultivated on both sides... anything like a hearty goodwill between the nations will not be possible”.⁶⁵⁸ Conceding a temporary quiescence, covering the lead up to and unfolding of the 1900

⁶⁵⁴ BDW, 1, 166, Monson to Salisbury, 19 September, CF. Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 62.

⁶⁵⁵ BDW, 1, 196, Monson to Salisbury, 9 December 1898 & Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 112.

⁶⁵⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 113.

⁶⁵⁷ DDF 1, xiv, 882-883, Cambon to Delcassé, 22 December.

⁶⁵⁸ Quoted by Andrew Roberts, *Salisbury Victorian Titan* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson:1999), 710, and Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 138.

Exposition, Monson forecast that “An entire change of policy, consisting in the frank endeavour to establish really friendly relations with England, however much it may be desired by a few sensible people in France, does not appear to me to be within measurable distance of realization”.⁶⁵⁹

Having previously declared himself patient, because “nous avons tout à gagner à attendre”, the new ambassador in London decided the time was ripe in the New Year to take up negotiations on British and French boundaries in central Africa.⁶⁶⁰ Formally notifying Salisbury that Marchand had now departed Fashoda, Cambon raised the question of the Sudan-Congo frontier on 11-12 January 1899.⁶⁶¹ Despite the best urgings of Delcassé for concessions of territory in the Bahr El Ghazal, Cambon was unable to induce Salisbury to let the French into the Nile valley.⁶⁶² The agreement eventually reached on 21 March confined French influence to the watershed of the Congo to the west, with the border determined midway between the watershed of that river, and the Nile from which France was therefore excluded.⁶⁶³ Andrew highlights four other difficulties, among them the proposed French lease of a coaling station at Muscat on the Red Sea, attempts to expand French influence in Shanghai, and the already long running dispute over fishing rights in Newfoundland.⁶⁶⁴ These could not always be resolved amicably. British opposition to the tariffs imposed in Madagascar by the French met with the observation from Cambon and Delcassé that it was not in their power to alter them.⁶⁶⁵ That Monson continued to be struck by Delcassé’s willingness to discuss all

⁶⁵⁹ NA, FO 27/3398.716, Monson to Salisbury, 29 December 1898.

⁶⁶⁰ DDF 1, xiv, 870, Cambon to Delcassé, 12 December 1898.

⁶⁶¹ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Première série Tome xv (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1959), 25, Cambon to Delcassé, 12 January, BDW, 1, 197-198, Salisbury to Monson, 11 January 1899, Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 55 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 178.

⁶⁶² DDF 1, xv, 112 & 121-122, Delcassé to Cambon, 7 & 10 February, Cambon to Delcassé 8 February and BDW, 1, 201-202, Salisbury to Monson, 15 February 1899.

⁶⁶³ DDF 1, xv, 189-190, Déclaration, 21 March 1899 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 179-180.

⁶⁶⁴ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 114-116.

⁶⁶⁵ DDF 1, xv, 29, 63-68, Cambon to Delcassé 13, 21 & 21 January, and Delcassé to Cambon, 24 January, stating “le parlement est souverain et il n’entendrait pas raison sur ce chapitre”.

Anglo-French differences, in a “spirit of conciliation, and with the intention of conceding what they properly can”, did though imply that any disharmony was neither complete nor permanent.⁶⁶⁶

French Diplomacy during the Boer War.

By August 1899, the continued disagreements were exacerbated by a Royal Navy warship attacking a French fishing vessel off Dungeness, killing one fisherman. In light of his latest dialogue with Monson, Delcassé wondered to Cambon whether a mutually beneficial “politique d’entente” with Britain was at all possible.⁶⁶⁷ The same long interview over Muscat and Shanghai, as Monson admitted, “at times extremely animated” in tone, left Delcassé reported as deploring London’s “deliberate intention of being unfriendly to France in every way”, and pleading for the ambassador to do all in his power “to facilitate the maintenance of a good understanding between France and England”.⁶⁶⁸ Meanwhile, Monson, increasingly mindful of the implications should Anglo-French relations become more tense, continued to be preoccupied by what he saw as the “very overt court” paid to France by the Kaiser, whose “proffer of peculiarly intimate friendship” to Loubet was welcomed by many French.⁶⁶⁹ Consideration was already being given in St Petersburg, where Delcassé visited the Tsar and his ministers from 4-9 August, and Berlin, to the potential for a joint intervention in the event of war breaking out between Britain and the Boer republics.⁶⁷⁰

In autumn 1899, much the same geopolitical factors prevailed as in the autumn of 1898. Of the major continental powers, France was the most vulnerable to British hostility, whether in the form of disrupted trade or in the more direct, military, sense of being

⁶⁶⁶ *BDW*, 1, 199, Monson to Salisbury, 16 January.

⁶⁶⁷ *DDF* 1, xv, 441-442, Delcassé to Cambon, 13 August.

⁶⁶⁸ *BDW*, 1, 212 & 213, Monson to Salisbury, 14 August.

⁶⁶⁹ *NA*, FO 27/3458.337, Monson to Salisbury, 9 July.

⁶⁷⁰ For example, *DDF* 1, xv, 434-437, Boutiron (Berlin) to Delcassé to Cambon, 11 August, advised German speculation as to the formation of a Russo-French front against Britain.

physically closest to Britain with a large number of African and far eastern colonies susceptible to naval blockade, internal disorder or external invasion. As Monson reflected, “the brunt of a rupture would fall chiefly upon France”.⁶⁷¹ Even the extravagant fantasisations of Driant acknowledged that, in the event of war, the fall of distant possessions such as Madagascar, Djibouti, Indo-China, could not be foreseeably avoided.⁶⁷² After the painful reminder of Fashoda, those in government were well aware of the inadvisability of acting alone.

The same episode had served as a lesson on the potential ineffectiveness of the alliance with Russia, an Empire with no direct interest in African territory. Nicholas II may have privately opined that, with the merest mobilisation of troops on the frontier of India, he could “change the course of the war” and bring it to a halt.⁶⁷³ However, strong though his forces may have been on the land mass of Europe or northern Asia, he had no power to intervene directly in the Boer War, nor to protect French possessions other than by the indirect means of attacking India through Afghanistan. To everyone in France outside of those extreme nationalist circles least connected with reality, therefore, a French intervention in the Boer War, solo or with Russia, was out of the question. In these circumstances, the attitude of Germany became crucial, as the only continental coalition with the potential to impose a peace on Britain was that of France, Russia, and Germany (in whose wake Austria-Hungary and Italy might be expected to follow). There was in fact a substantial pre-history of hints at Franco-German collaboration over southern Africa at British expense. In the wake of the attempted overthrow of the Transvaal government of the Jameson Raid, in January 1896 the Germans several times raised the

⁶⁷¹ BDW, 1, 235, Monson to Salisbury, 27 October.

⁶⁷² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 227-231 & Vol 3, 430.

⁶⁷³ Letter from Tsar Nicholas II to sister, 2 November 1899, quoted in Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 665, Elisaveta Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia and the Boer War 1899-1902* (Pretoria, CUM Books: 1981), 11 & Derek Spring, “Russian Foreign Policy and the Boer War” in Keith Wilson (ed), *The International Impact of the Boer War* (Chesham, Acumen: 2001), 48. See picture 4.1.

possibility of collaboration with a view to checking “l’insatiable appétit de l’Angleterre”, but met with a distrustful response from Berthelot.⁶⁷⁴ Despite the publicity attached to Chamberlain’s notions of an Anglo-German alliance, and later indications that the Kaiser was not as supportive of the Boers as had once been the case, it was not wholly unrealistic to suppose that German policymakers in 1899 might be interested.⁶⁷⁵

The First Intervention Attempt.

By early October, the European press, much of it strongly pro-Boer in sympathy, was alive with speculation of a continental coalition, perhaps ostensibly animated by the ideals of The Hague, formed to compel an end to the Boer War and the imposition of a peace unlikely to be welcomed in London. The days directly preceding the war found the Russian foreign Minister Count Muraviev in Spain, where he met the Spanish President Francisco Silvela. Fuelling further speculation, he continued from San Sebastian into France on 6 October, for extensive talks with Delcassé from 10 October, then Loubet on 27 October on the eve of his departure, before arriving in Berlin in early November with the Tsar to meet the Kaiser and von Bülow. Taken to have shared the Anglophobe leanings of his predecessor Lobanov, Muraviev has often been cast as the would-be architect of any anti British coalition, possibly backed by a Russian military machine that regarded 1899-1900 as a good moment to strike in Persia and Turkey.⁶⁷⁶ More recent studies have cast doubt on his motives and certainty of purpose, stressing the need for a period of prolonged consolidation after “the dramatic step forward by Russia in the Far East” of 1897-98 which left the Tsarist government temporarily

⁶⁷⁴ Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Première série Tome xii (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1959), 380-383, Herbet (Berlin) to Berthelot, 1 & 2 January & Archives of *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*, Correspondence Commerciale et Politique Nouvelle Série, Transvaal-Orange, Vol 4, (author illegible), note, 17 January 1896, and Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 158-159.

⁶⁷⁵ Over 2 years later, the Kaiser initially refused to receive Dr Leyds, but then did so, against a backdrop of certain sections of German opinion, especially in commerce, turning against the poor administration of the Transvaal- MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 8, Boutiron (Berlin) to Delcassé, 3, 7 & 24 October 1898.

⁶⁷⁶ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 271 & Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia Boer War* (1981), 7.

overstretched.⁶⁷⁷ Nevertheless, and notwithstanding urges to caution from colleagues, it seems clear that (however tentatively) Muraviev did raise the idea whilst in Spain and Paris of a continental coalition, and did subsequently go to Berlin with a view to sounding out German policymakers as to their willingness to participate in such a coalition.⁶⁷⁸

Despite, or perhaps because of, Monson's mistaken willingness to believe that Delcassé could draw on Russian diplomatic and military support during Fashoda, a year later he would prove more sceptical of a France-Russia combination acting against Britain.⁶⁷⁹ Prior to the war, Delcassé had already denied that France had been one of the three powers asked by Boer representative Dr Leyds to intervene in Britain's dispute with Transvaal, and gave Monson to understand that "he should not listen to any such suggestion".⁶⁸⁰ With the sole qualification being the need for French investments in South Africa to be protected, the ambassador passed on these assertions without questioning their sincerity, if critical of hostility from the French press towards Britain.⁶⁸¹ Muraviev's visit was inevitably a source of comment, with initial emphasis on the private purpose of his presence being superseded by more malign explanations.⁶⁸² Warned by Tornielli of the "mischievous" motives behind the presence of the Russian minister rendered all the more dangerous by his "mediocre intelligence", Monson also relayed the Italian Ambassador's opinion of there being "no likelihood that Franco-

⁶⁷⁷ Spring, "Russian Foreign Policy", Wilson (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 43. Such a thesis would also help to explain Russian desire for a disarmament conference and inertia during the Fashoda crisis.

⁶⁷⁸ Spring, "Russian Foreign Policy", Wilson (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 46, stating that a letter from Russian Finance minister Witte, advising against any adventures, had awaited Muraviev's arrival in Paris.

⁶⁷⁹ For example see *BDW*, 1, 183, Monson to Salisbury, 27 October 1898, "I can now state with positive assurance that France can count on more than moral support on the part of Russia in the event of a rupture with England...", although this view was quickly modified, *BDW*, 1, 185, Monson to Salisbury, 28 October 1898, with the observation that Muraviev had tried to persuade the French "not to... provoke an attack from England".

⁶⁸⁰ *NA*, FO 27/3461 (telegrams).129, Monson to Salisbury, 21 September 1899.

⁶⁸¹ Criticisms repeated at *BDW*, 1, 233, Monson to Salisbury, 1 October.

⁶⁸² *NA*, FO 27/3459.429, Monson to Salisbury, 13 October.

Russian blandishments would be successful at Berlin”.⁶⁸³ More alarming was an account from Austrian Chargé d’Affaires Dumba, whose “failure to pick up any trustworthy information” about Muraviev in Paris did not prevent him from passing on a third hand report, originating from the Austrian Chargé in Madrid, detailing the welcome given to the Russian by Silvela in San Sebastian and Muraviev’s expectation of an “ultimate agreement” for a four power intervention.⁶⁸⁴ From this, Dumba inferred that Muraviev must have raised the same subject with Loubet and Delcassé. However, he also relayed Muraviev’s perception of a reluctance on the part of the French government for the time being to “engage themselves very positively”, not least from fear of divisions in domestic opinion.⁶⁸⁵

At the same time, Monson’s direct impressions were not negative. Successive reports to London stressed the “marked cordiality” of Loubet “not animated by the anti-English sentiments which, if one could believe the French press to represent public opinion, are unanimously felt towards us”, as well as that of Waldeck Rousseau.⁶⁸⁶ Monson relied upon the forthcoming Paris Exposition “to chill” French responses to the designs imputed to Muraviev, and was not alone in following this line of reasoning.⁶⁸⁷ Attitudes within the French government were not perceived as deteriorating, with Loubet mindful of “the interest of France in keeping on good terms with a neighbour who took one third annually of her total exports” and therefore embarrassed by a hostile French press bent on undermining the well-being of his own country.⁶⁸⁸ The same was true of Delcassé, admired through December for showing “so much firmness and determination in resisting abuses” against Britain from the French press, noted despite his offence at

⁶⁸³ *BDW*, 1, 233-234, Monson to Salisbury, 24 October.

⁶⁸⁴ *BDW*, 1, 234-235, Monson to Salisbury, 27 October.

⁶⁸⁵ *BDW*, 1, 234, Monson to Salisbury, 27 October.

⁶⁸⁶ *NA*, FO 27/3459.429, Monson to Salisbury, 24 October & 7 November.

⁶⁸⁷ *NA*, FO 27/3459.429, Monson to Salisbury, 3 November & *BDW*, 1, 238, Sir Francis Plunkett (Brussels) to Salisbury, 4 November.

⁶⁸⁸ *NA*, FO 27/3460.482, Monson to Salisbury, 21 November.

Chamberlain's "threats against France" to "favour cultivating friendship with England", still "exceptionally moderate in tone", and unlikely to succumb "to the temptation of taking advantage of... a serious embarrassment" to Britain such as the defeats recently sustained in South Africa.⁶⁸⁹

Any consideration as to Delcassé's actual intentions in the last three months of 1899 meets with a central documentary void that makes the forming of any definitive conclusions near impossible. The published *Documents Diplomatiques* contain almost nothing of relevance written by him in October-November 1899.⁶⁹⁰ Delcassé's October conversations with Muraviev must clearly be pivotal in any judgements, yet no records were kept of what they said when they met. It may have been a reflection on the extent of French agency behind the scenes that, after Patenôtre had been approached in April by Silvela, it had been Delcassé who in August had suggested Spanish involvement in any continental coalition to Muraviev.⁶⁹¹ Andrew further stressed the differing and discrete ways in which Delcassé had been more or less indirectly pursuing Germany for a joint initiative against Britain in summer and autumn 1899.⁶⁹² Whereas Andrew interpreted French support for an intervention in the Boer War as a means of forcing an end to British occupation of Egypt, Grenville felt that Delcassé was "thinking in terms of a preventive war" to forestall a post-Boer War British attack on France.⁶⁹³ However, extreme caution was advisable for France whatever its policy, both for geopolitical reasons should France find itself out on a limb, exposed to British hostility alone, and in view of the vacillating signs coming from the German leadership which, it should not be

⁶⁸⁹ BDW, 1, 242, Monson to Salisbury, 1 December, NA, FO 27/3461.147, Monson to Salisbury, 6 December, FO 27/3460, Monson to Salisbury, 8 & 15 December.

⁶⁹⁰ DDF 1, xv, 469-522 and Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Première série Tome xvi (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1959), 1-25, a deficiency also reflected in the archives from which those documents were selected-see also Venier, "French Foreign Policy", Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 68.

⁶⁹¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 147-148.

⁶⁹² Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 160-162.

⁶⁹³ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 166-167 & 169 and Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 271.

forgotten, had only a few months previously been doing its utmost to ferment a Franco-British war over the Upper Nile. Given that Germany was too powerful for any continental coalition to overlook and the personal friendship between the Tsar and Kaiser, it also made sense that it should be the Russians rather than the French who broached any notions of an intervention with Germany.⁶⁹⁴

A brief résumé remains of Muraviev's 27 October discussion with Loubet, who was indeed sounded out as to French willingness for "joint action without, if not against, England" in order to "moderate" a settlement of the war.⁶⁹⁵ That Delcassé also discussed intervention in the Boer War with Muraviev, and agreed to the Russian approaching the Germans, is apparent from his own retrospective account:

Vous savez que, pendant le dernier séjour du comte Mouravieff à Paris nous nous étions mis d'accord... pour tenter de mettre fin au moment opportun à la guerre anglo-transvaalienne. Le comte Mouravieff, qui devait voir à Potsdam l'Empereur Guillaume et M de Bülow s'était chargé de sonder le Gouvernement impérial... Ils lui parurent telles qu'aucune conversation ne put s'engager à ce sujet.⁶⁹⁶

The inference of a genuine welcome for the Russian foreign minister's proposal is reinforced by Delcassé's personal impression of how, at dinner with Muraviev in October, "L'amitié personnelle se greffe sur les liens politiques".⁶⁹⁷

Frequent and varied indications of German intentions were reaching the Quai d'Orsay. Boutiron's reports of the German press disinclined to involvement in any war, an

⁶⁹⁴ Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 379, makes the additional point that the German and Russian monarchs and ruling classes, "in a very real class solidarity", tended to look down upon, and not take seriously, President Faure. Presumably the same must have been true of their aristocratic foreign ministers relative to Delcassé, the son of a provincial court Bailiff. Hence Wilhelm II's 1904 comments to the Tsar "Loubet and Delcassé are no doubt experienced statesmen. But they not being princes or emperors I am unable to place them in a question of confidence... on the same footing as my equal, cousin and friend", quoted by Giles MacDonough, *The Last Kaiser William the Impetuous* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson: 2000), 280.

⁶⁹⁵ Abel Combarieu, *Sept Ans à L'Elysée Avec le Président Loubet* (Paris, Librairie Hachette: 1932), 41, cited & translated by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 163.

⁶⁹⁶ MAE, CCPN, Allemagne, Vol 15, Delcassé to Montebello, 2 March 1900.

⁶⁹⁷ MAE, Papiers Delcassé, Vol 26, Delcassé to Madame Delcassé, October 1899.

attitude of non intervention determined by German economic interests in South Africa, had been echoed by that of Richtofen on behalf of a government that affirmed its “neutralité absolue”.⁶⁹⁸ Once the war had commenced, Bülow treated De Noailles to another lecture on “l’identité de nos intérêts dans les différentes parties du monde” and reportedly advised the Russian ambassador of “la main absolument libre dans la question du Transvaal” enjoyed by Germany.⁶⁹⁹ Further mixed messages emanated from Wilhelm II himself on 27 October, fulminating against the solely economic motivations of the English who “no longer make war except for money... gangrenous and utterly corrupt; the highest society is now only a society of jobbers”.⁷⁰⁰ In the next breath, he went onto explain why intervention was out of the question- “during the last four years the English have developed their navy to such an extent that I am paralysed. It is impossible to take risks against them; my commerce, Hamburg and my ports are too exposed”.⁷⁰¹ On the eve of the Tsar’s arrival in Potsdam, as Noailles related to Delcassé, an Agence Wolff press release stated that Russia, France and Spain had been ready to send a collective note proposing arbitration, but this had been thwarted by German refusal to join them.⁷⁰² In view of the lack of interest thus indicated, it was no wonder that Muraviev abstained from even raising the subject of an intervention, try though he did to persuade the Kaiser that British naval strength would in the event of war have to be too thinly spread to achieve local mastery anywhere, and had therefore been overestimated.⁷⁰³ The German response to Muraviev’s proposal can further be attributed

⁶⁹⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 9, Boutiron (Berlin) to Delcassé, 2 September, DDF 1, xv, 455-456 & 469-471, Boutiron to Delcassé, 14 September & 1 October 1899.

⁶⁹⁹ DDF 1, xv, 495, Noailles to Delcassé, 22 October.

⁷⁰⁰ DDF 1, xv, 502, Noailles to Delcassé, 29 October, translated by Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), 163. On Wilhelm’s ambiguous attitude to the perceived materialism of British society, see Lamar Cecil, *Wilhelm II Emperor and Exile 1900-1941* (London, University of North Carolina Press: 1996), 82.

⁷⁰¹ DDF 1, xv, 503, Noailles to Delcassé, 29 October, translated by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 164.

⁷⁰² DDF 1, xv, 509, Noailles to Delcassé, 7 November & Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 68.

⁷⁰³ DDF 1, xv, 521, Noailles to Delcassé, 12 November. Tellingly, *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette 1871-1914*, (GP) Vol 15 (Berlin, DeutscheVerlags Gesellschaft: 1924), 408-410 contains nothing on Muraviev’s trip to Potsdam, which fell through the gap between letters of 30 October and 15 November, running one directly after the other in the volume.

to dynastic considerations, in the form of Wilhelm's long planned visit to his Grandmother Victoria, a trip that, whatever may have been protested about it being "a purely family affair", could not, when entailing the Kaiser and Bülow meeting Chamberlain and Balfour, but publicly take on a political aspect "as a gesture of Anglo-German friendship".⁷⁰⁴ As Grenville and others have argued, what finally sealed the fate of Muraviev's overture was the progress being made towards an Anglo-German agreement over their respective spheres of influence in the Samoan islands, announced on 14 November, prior to the Germans' departure for Windsor, after which the Kaiser irritated the Prince of Wales with unsolicited advice on how to beat the Boers.⁷⁰⁵

This first attempt at intervention having failed, Andrew maintained that Delcassé was genuinely and bitterly disappointed that Muraviev "ran up against a brick wall" in Germany.⁷⁰⁶ It is impossible to say what he would have done had Germany responded positively to Muraviev and his bluff been called, but for the moment he took steps to rein in Noailles to "une extrême circonspection" not permitting him to expand on Bülow's hints about Franco-German identities of interest, or even "aucune initiative" here.⁷⁰⁷ Ignoring Dutch newspaper speculations as to the existence and desirability of a continental coalition to end the war and "une circulaire allemande imprimé à Leipzig" addressed to the mayor of Dieppe urging Franco-Russian collaboration to stop the war and use the opportunity to raise Egypt at the negotiating table, Delcassé had largely to

⁷⁰⁴ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 279, Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 103-104 & Martin Kroger, "Imperial Germany and the Boer War", Wilson (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 33; see also Lamar Cecil, *Wilhelm II Prince and Emperor 1859-1900* (London, University of North Carolina Press: 1989), 333-334 & *Wilhelm II 1900-1941* (1996), 75 and Kiste, *Wilhelm II* (2001), 103-104.

⁷⁰⁵ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 274-279 & also Cecil, *Wilhelm II 1859-1900* (1989), 327-328. See for examples *GP 1871-1914*, 15, 553 & 559, Wilhelm to Prince of Wales, 4 & 23 February 1900.

⁷⁰⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 164.

⁷⁰⁷ *DDF* 1, xv, 514, Delcassé to Noailles, 11 November 1899.

wait on events.⁷⁰⁸ This did not preclude either persisting emollience when dealing with Monson, or a continued state of alert for signs of German attitudes.

The Second Intervention Attempt.

Although irked and embarrassed by Chamberlain's 30 November 1899 Leicester speech clumsily proposing an Anglo-German alliance, von Bülow was reported "tout disposé à vivre avec elle [Britain] en paix et en bonne entente sur la base d'une pleine réciprocité".⁷⁰⁹ Whilst Chamberlain's initiative alarmed some sections of the Paris press, Noailles' reports continued to confirm "l'hostilité unanime de la presse allemande contre l'Angleterre", despite German concern that trouble for Britain in Egypt or India might benefit France and Russia, but not Germany.⁷¹⁰ Muraviev therefore began to despair of the possibility of an intervention.⁷¹¹ Two elements conspired to bring a European initiative on the Boer War back to prominence. British reverses in November-December had made Bülow begin to wonder if the British navy were not as unfit for war as the British army had been in South Africa.⁷¹² Secondly, in its bid to stop supplies reaching Transvaal via neutral Portuguese territory, the Royal Navy overzealously stopped three German mail steamers. Although they were rapidly re-released and compensation paid this episode triggered a very public outcry in Germany.⁷¹³ It was a combination of these factors that seems to have prompted Bülow, though persisting in his complaints of the weakness of the German fleet, and Wilhelm, to make approaches to the Russian ambassador in Berlin in January 1900.⁷¹⁴ On 26 January, Bülow aired to Noailles the

⁷⁰⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 11, De Laigny (Rotterdam) to Delcassé, 14 & 20 November, Circular 20 November.

⁷⁰⁹ DDF 1, xvi, 45, Noailles to Delcassé to Noailles, 12 December, and Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 274-275.

⁷¹⁰ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 12, Noailles to Delcassé, 18 & 24 December 1899. See picture 4.2.

⁷¹¹ DDF 1, xvi, 79, Montebello to Delcassé, 19 January 1900.

⁷¹² Quoting Bulow in October-November 1899- Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 273 & Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 164.

⁷¹³ Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 283-285, Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 253 & Cecil, *Wilhelm II 1859-1900* (1989), 334.

⁷¹⁴ DDF 1, xvi, 72-73 & 85-87, Montebello to Delcassé & Delcassé to Montebello, 15 & 25 January 1900.

desire for “une entente qui sera à l’avantage des deux pays”.⁷¹⁵ Delcassé was further encouraged by rumours of an anti British mutiny in the Egyptian army that promised to tie down troops there, and even sparked rumours that London might call for the assistance of Italian troops in Egypt, to endorse the idea of re-raising the neutralisation of the Suez Canal, and hence British occupation of Egypt.⁷¹⁶

Andrew is in no doubt as to the strength of “Delcassé’s desire to profit from England’s difficulties”, citing in support a report of 31 January from the Russian Ambassador in Paris, Urussov, to Muraviev, that “France was ready to follow us as far as we were willing to go”.⁷¹⁷ An article in *Le Matin*, seemingly inspired by the Quai, argued that the time was ripe to re-open the question of Egypt, encouraging Germany to join in action on this.⁷¹⁸ However, Delcassé remained circumspect in his approach and wary of German motives. Having queried the implications of the Anglo-German accord of August 1898 for German reactions to any British encroachments on Portuguese Mozambique, he continued well into February to receive indications as to the determined neutrality of the German government.⁷¹⁹ Montebello interpreted the “réponse évasive” of Germany to Russian overtures as part of a consciously obscurantist policy; “L’Empereur Guillaume, fidèle à la tactique qu’il suit à notre égard et vis-à-vis de la Russie, cherche à se rendre de plus en plus impénétrable”. As “un concours réel et efficace de l’Allemagne en aucun circonstance” could not be relied upon, the best that could be done was to wait, whilst not appearing too impatient.⁷²⁰

⁷¹⁵ DDF 1, xvi, 87, Noailles to Delcassé, 26 January.

⁷¹⁶ DDF 1, xvi, 89-91, Cogordan (Cairo) to Delcassé, 29 January.

⁷¹⁷ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 166.

⁷¹⁸ *Le Matin*, 6 February; Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 168.

⁷¹⁹ DDF 1, xvi, 68-69, 71-72 & 118-119, Delcassé to Montebello, Noailles to Delcassé & Gérard (Brussels) to Delcassé, 5, 12 January & 13 February.

⁷²⁰ DDF 1, xvi, 122, Montebello to Delcassé, 15 February. Combarieu, *Sept Ans* (1932), 50, covering Delcassé’s 1 March meeting with Loubet, stressed the importance he continued to attach “à s’assurer que le l’Allemagne s’associera loyalement et sans arrière pensée de projet exclusif à cette démarche diplomatique”.

On 28 February, Delcassé was approached by Prince Urussov, who told him that it was time for further overtures to Berlin, in search of a definitive statement of German policy. Paradoxically, Urussov indicated that the timing of this idea stemmed from the face saving success, at Paardeberg, that Britain had now begun to enjoy in the war.⁷²¹ On this reasoning, “l’Angleterre, dont l’amour-propre a cessé de saigner”, should be more amenable to an intervention. Dressing up his assent in terms of the Republic’s peaceful nature, humanity and the Hague Convention, Delcassé endorsed such “une démarche tout amicale”.⁷²² The Russians having been emphatically left to approach alone the Kaiser in Berlin, Montebello later stressed “c’est au nom de la Russie et la France solidaire que le c’té d’Osten Sacken parlera”, adding that it would be only after German assent had been given that any decision could be reached on the form of “l’intervention amicale” and possible American involvement in it.⁷²³

The Quai d’Orsay had then to wait for news from the Russians. On 6 March, the initial German response reached Delcassé, by way of a note confirming the idea of “une démarche collective” had been welcomed by the Kaiser, but only on condition that Russia first sound out the response of London to it; Muraviev, in St Petersburg, maintained that “Toute démarche, auprès du Gouvernement anglais devrait essentiellement être solidaire, simultanée ou collective, témoignant de l’accord parfaitement établi entre les grandes Puissances”.⁷²⁴ Further discussions in Berlin coincided with a Boer appeal for international intervention to bring a durable peace on a basis mutually acceptable to both sides which Delcassé, expressing no opinion himself,

⁷²¹ Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 72 & “Delcassé and Intervention”, Chassaigne & Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 50, point out that this idea originated with the Tsar; Combarieu, *Sept Ans* (1932), 50, confirms that Delcassé endorsed it.

⁷²² *DDF* 1, xvi, 140-141, Delcassé to Noailles, 4 March.

⁷²³ *MAE*, CCPN, Allemagne, Vol 10, Montebello to Delcassé, 3 March.

⁷²⁴ *DDF* 1, xvi, 143-144, Note de l’Ambassade de Russie, 6 March.

circulated for comment to his representatives on the continent.⁷²⁵ News of a second German condition then reached Delcassé and Montebello, that “les puissances... devraient se garantir, pour un temps à déterminer, l’intégrité de leurs territoires européens”.⁷²⁶ This effectively meant that, in order to secure the vital German co-operation, Delcassé would have been obliged publicly to re-affirm the Treaty of Frankfurt, and therefore the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. Such an idea ran entirely contrary to his reportedly heartfelt sentiments on the ultimate recovery of those provinces.⁷²⁷ The lack of plans in the foreseeable future to win them back notwithstanding, for any French statesman to renounce the provinces would have been political suicide. The Russians therefore did not press the French to accept the German condition, and the second major attempt at intervention thereby foundered.

French Diplomacy and the Boer War after March 1900.

Delcassé now hastened to give open reassurances of French neutrality. Confirming that the Boer presidents had requested intervention from the powers to bring a peace acceptable to both sides, he stated on 15 March that, in view of the fundamental cleavage between the combatants as to the independence of the republics, it would be superfluous to ask whether France would help to mediate. In a hint of his displeasure at how things had recently gone, he added that France might second anyone else’s efforts, but would not initiate its own “après tant de dures expériences et de si profondes modifications dans l’équilibre des forces européennes”.⁷²⁸ This met with congratulations from Salisbury, and was followed up by Delcassé’s telegram, referring to the British

⁷²⁵ DDF 1, xvi, 153-154, Delcassé to Berlin, Washington, Rome, Vienna, etc, 12 March.

⁷²⁶ DDF 1, xvi, 162, Delcassé to P.Cambon, 14 March, CF. MAE, CCPN, Allemagne, Vol 10, Montebello to Delcassé, 15 March.

⁷²⁷ On which see Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 19 & 175, Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 82, and Zorgbibe, *Delcassé* (2001), 129; Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 125, quoted Delcassé, on the eve of Fashoda, saying of Alsace Lorraine “La France se souvient toujours-c’est son principale raison d’être”.

⁷²⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Delcassé Sénat-Séance, press clipping.

parliament's rejection of US good offices, advising French ambassadors of the pointlessness of further initiatives.⁷²⁹

More privately, Delcassé, reviewing German behaviour up to mid March 1900, had reason to reflect to Noailles upon appreciating “l'importance de l'expérience ainsi acquise”.⁷³⁰ That importance was also not lost in his comments to Loubet, who shortly started to believe him right to distrust Germany.⁷³¹ Whilst the primacy of Alsace-Lorraine as a pre-condition for support from Germany should already have been apparent in Delcassé's post-Fashoda contacts, the failure of intervention in the Boer War seems to have smarted far more, leaving the minister permanently disinclined to treat with the Kaiser or his diplomats.⁷³² In becoming profoundly alienated from the idea of negotiating with Germany, Delcassé opened the way to an understanding with Britain, but only in the long run. For the time being, Wilhelm hastened to tell London of his responsibility for the failure of the intervention plan (which his equivocations had encouraged in the first place), as Paul Cambon had predicted he would.⁷³³ Throughout the remainder of 1900, reports of a continued subsiding of tensions between Berlin and London reached the Quai d'Orsay.⁷³⁴ Delcassé and Cambon sought to play down the importance of an Anglo-German Accord on 16 October over China.⁷³⁵ However, worries returned to the danger of an Anglo-German rapprochement, that (in Noailles' words) “Trafalgar et Sedan se donnent la main”.⁷³⁶

⁷²⁹ MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne, Vol 12, Cambon to Delcassé, 21 March and T-O, Vols 24 & 29, Delcassé to 9 ambassadors, 26 March.

⁷³⁰ DDF 1, xvi, 173, Delcassé to Noailles, 26 March.

⁷³¹ Combarieu, *Sept Ans* (1932), 52.

⁷³² As manifested in the many ways described by Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 173-175 and Clarke, *Sleepwalkers* (2013), 135.

⁷³³ GP 1871-1914, 15, 523, contains the Prince's 7 March reply, but as to the original letter the footnote “Nicht bei den akten”. Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 74; P.Cambon, *Correspondance*, tome 2, (1940), 38-9, Paul Cambon to Jules Cambon, 19 March.

⁷³⁴ For example, DDF 1, xvi, 201-204, 223-226, 229, & 439-440, Boutiron, Noailles, Nisard (Saint Siège) & Boutiron to Delcassé, 26 April, 12, 16 May & 16 September.

⁷³⁵ DDF 1, xvi, 496-498, Delcassé to P.Cambon/Noailles, and Cambon to Delcassé, 30 October.

⁷³⁶ DDF 1, xvi, 225, Noailles to Delcassé, 12 May.

Whilst talks went on between London and Berlin into 1901, Delcassé reverted to the overt policy declared in December 1898, of not giving provocation or excuse for hostility from the British. On the conclusion of the second major intervention attempt, Delcassé could console himself with the thought that France had maintained sufficient distance from the plans for intervention to avoid too close an association with them:

La proposition russe n'était... qu'une suite donnée aux suggestions répétées de l'Empereur Guillaume et de M de Bülow. Il est essentiel aussi de marquer que c'est l'ambassade de Russie seul qui a parlé au nom de la France et de la Russie solidarisées.⁷³⁷

Paul Cambon's relief that any future improvement in relations with Britain had not been jeopardised was stated more explicitly "Tout projet d'intervention est donc coulé: C'est regrettable mais quoique la chose n'était point réalisable, il est heureux que nous soyons sortis de là sans nous compromettre".⁷³⁸

Although Cambon relayed opinion in London, when the fall of Pretoria was imminent, that the war was all but over, it dragged on.⁷³⁹ Consequently, the Quai d'Orsay was subjected to intermittent pressures to intervene in order to bring peace. Some of these came from the Boers themselves, despite the realisation on Leyds' part that France and Russia alone were not strong enough to force a peace on the British.⁷⁴⁰ Rather more originated from a plethora of French philanthropic organisations.⁷⁴¹ Delcassé remained impervious to all of these, likewise in autumn 1901 Belgian and Dutch promptings which he met with criticism of the dilatory response to Boer petitions of the court at The

⁷³⁷ DDF 1, xvi, 173, Delcassé annotation to letter to Noailles, 26 March.

⁷³⁸ P.Cambon, *Correspondance* tome 2, (1940), 39, Paul Cambon to Jules Cambon, 19 March .

⁷³⁹ DDF 1, xvi, 250-251, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 29 May.

⁷⁴⁰ DDF 1, xvi, 551-552, Delcassé to P.Cambon/Noailles/Montebello, 4 December; Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia Boer War* (1981), 72, citing letter of Dr Leyds, 4 April.

⁷⁴¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 14, Delcassé to Loubet, 26 March 1900, on the president's receipt of a petition from the Bureau français de la paix, and Vols 44 & 45 which contain vast numbers of similar petitions and addresses calling for French mediation.

Hague, and the comment that no offer of good offices could now usefully be made.⁷⁴² This last was confirmed by the vague responses elicited in European capitals by Russian feelers in early 1902, leaving Europe impotent to bring Britain to make peace.⁷⁴³

The Kaiser remained uninterested in intervention, despite the breakdown in Anglo-German alliance negotiations, and feelings roused in November 1901 in the open “tempêtes d’indignation” occasioned by Chamberlain, annoyed by foreign criticism of British treatment of Boer civilians, making a speech pointing out that the Germans had been equally forceful in their dealings with the French in 1870-71.⁷⁴⁴ The row was prolonged by the defiant response some 3 months later in the Reichstag from Bülow.⁷⁴⁵ By late 1901, preoccupations in Paris had reverted to the role of Morocco in Anglo-French relations.⁷⁴⁶ Anxiety that upon the conclusion of the Boer War, Britain might turn upon France diminished on the basis that the cost, financial and human, of South Africa, had reminded the British for the first time in decades of what war actually was like.⁷⁴⁷

French Neutrality in Practice.

France could not, though, altogether escape dilemmas arising from the war, many of them stemming from the sometimes uncontrollable expressions of domestic public opinion. In January 1900, despite rumours coming from *The Times* journalist Blowitz, Monson had remained convinced of Delcassé’s “usual cordiality”, adding that “his

⁷⁴² MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 25, Secretary of Ligue Belge des Droits de l’Homme to Delcassé 26 September, Delcassé circular 2 October, Delcassé to the Hague 19 November 1901, Delcassé circular 13 January 1902.

⁷⁴³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 25, Noailles to Delcassé, 20 November 1901 stating German disinterest in taking any initiative in London, & Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Deuxième série Tome ii (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1931), 39-40, Montebello to Delcassé, 17 January 1902.

⁷⁴⁴ As reported by Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, Deuxième série Tome i (Paris, Alfred Costes: 1930), 583-585 & 616-618, Noailles & Cambon to Delcassé, 9 & 20 November 1901. Cecil, *Wilhelm II 1900-1941* (1996), 83.

⁷⁴⁵ Cecil, *Wilhelm II 1900-1941* (1996), 84.

⁷⁴⁶ For examples, see *DDF* 2, i, 322-32, 413-414 & 443-445, P.Cambon to Delcassé 11 June & 1 August, Note de Département sur le Maroc, 24 August 1901.

⁷⁴⁷ *DDF* 2, i, 487, Boutiron to Delcassé, 20 September 1901.

manner and his language were both of a character so friendly and straightforward that I could detect no symptom of his having entered into an international conspiracy against us”.⁷⁴⁸ Although the foreign minister remained “as cordial as ever” at the end of the month, Delcassé suffered a further embarrassment.⁷⁴⁹ British sensibilities, sharpened by their reverses to date, generated what Paul Cambon described as “L’affaire Léandre”. Charles Léandre (1862-1934) was a French artist whose cartoons appeared in satirical journals such as *Le Rire* and *L’Assiette au Beurre*. Many were Anglophobic, the several directed at Queen Victoria personally including a depiction of her at the time of Wilhelm II’s visit to Britain as a chubby tartan-stockinged grandmother luring the German Emperor away from his former sympathy for Kruger; more offensive still was that depicting Kruger climbing out from underneath her skirts.⁷⁵⁰ In early February 1900, when Delcassé’s cabinet colleague Leygues, at the Ministry of Interior, arranged for the artist to be invested with the Legion of Honour, Monson was instructed temporarily to leave Paris, in protest.⁷⁵¹ Paul Cambon, attributing the withdrawal to a personal intervention by the Prince of Wales and critical of the press attention given to it, bemoaned that “Tous ces petits riens finissent par créer un état d’esprit très fâcheux”.⁷⁵² Delcassé was equally unhappy about it, but was not in a position actively “to lower the temperature”.⁷⁵³ However, Monson quietly returned to Paris and the affair had died down by March.⁷⁵⁴

Whilst doing as little as possible had been the most tactful course for Delcassé relative to Léandre, this was not an option when, after Kruger’s departure from South Africa by

⁷⁴⁸ *BDW*, 1, 247-248, Monson to Salisbury, 19 January 1900.

⁷⁴⁹ *NA*, FO 27/3493.49, Monson to Salisbury, 1 February.

⁷⁵⁰ See Pictures 4.3 & 4.4.

⁷⁵¹ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 67 & Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 269-270.

⁷⁵² P.Cambon, *Correspondance* tome 2, (1940), 33-34, Paul Cambon to Jules Cambon, 20 February 1900.

⁷⁵³ Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 105.

⁷⁵⁴ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 67.

way of Laurenço-Marquès, the old president came to Europe.⁷⁵⁵ One biographer of Wilhelm II claims that, in a France still embittered by Fashoda, Kruger “received a rapturous reception from the government”.⁷⁵⁶ However, this was the case only compared to the behaviour of the Kaiser and Tsar, who subsequently refused to receive Kruger at all. In reality, Loubet and Delcassé’s response was highly reserved and circumspect, in line with the advice of the Centrale’s bureaucrats; “Le gouvernement de la République doive observer une certaine réserve et notamment éviter des démonstrations de nature à préjuger ses résolutions ultérieures”.⁷⁵⁷ When Kruger landed at Marseilles on 22 November 1900, the local Prefect greeted him and tried to get Leyds to dissuade him from taking up an invitation to the local council.⁷⁵⁸ According to the report to Delcassé “sympathiquement acclamé, sans incident” in Marseilles, Kruger progressed north, closely watched by the local prefects, through Lyon where the crowds assembled to see him broke out into “une fâcheuse bouscalade”.⁷⁵⁹ Acutely sensitive also as to the extent of Anglophobia among those greeting the visit, Delcassé routed Kruger’s procession through Paris away from the British embassy, and Loubet chose to receive him, despite his now being the president of a country that had, technically, ceased to exist (by virtue of its annexation by Britain).⁷⁶⁰ In private politely declining Kruger’s suggestion for another attempt at arbitrating an end to the war, with reference to the failure of previous attempts, Delcassé committed himself to nothing.⁷⁶¹ In public, the meeting went some way to assuaging pro-Boer sentiment which the Comité pour l’indépendance des Boers had not lost the opportunity to whip up during Kruger’s “voyage triomphal” to Paris on 24 November.⁷⁶² Delcassé’s meeting also gained some credit in the press of other

⁷⁵⁵ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 458 and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 310.

⁷⁵⁶ MacDonough, *Last Kaiser* (2000), 249.

⁷⁵⁷ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Note pour le Ministre, 5 November 1900.

⁷⁵⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Prefect of Marseilles to Leyds, 23 November.

⁷⁵⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Prefects of Marseilles, Valence and Lyons to Delcassé, all 23 November.

⁷⁶⁰ Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 155.

⁷⁶¹ DDF 1, xvi, 551-552, Delcassé to Noailles, Montebello, P.Cambon, 4 December.

⁷⁶² Bernard Lugan, *La Guerre des Boers 1899-1902* (Perrin: 1998), 249, 251.

continental countries, especially when compared to Germany's attitude.⁷⁶³ At the same time, his actions had been sufficiently well-judged to avoid antagonising the British, who according to Cambon would interpret European demonstrations surrounding Kruger in terms of domestic affairs, and greeted the visit to France with "plus de curiosité que de réel intérêt".⁷⁶⁴

The Role of Consuls in France and Southern Africa.

A similarly circumspect and tactful approach characterised Delcassé's handling of several nasty little incidents, involving local consular representatives, which could have escalated to jeopardise Anglo-French relations. Despite Renault's view on "le caractère plus administratif que politique des fonctions consulaires", Consulates could sometimes carry a distinctly political, and even contentious, charge.⁷⁶⁵ From the early 1890s, a desire for separate consuls, commensurate with the demands of a region whose population included a large merchant navy, became a major grievance in Norway that was repeatedly frustrated by the Swedish King. That the joint Swedish-Norwegian consulates were dominated by Swedes continued to fuel Norwegian claims for independence until Stockholm conceded the split of the joint Sweden-Norway monarchy in October 1905.⁷⁶⁶

The French consular service encompassed representation within the 10 powers with French ambassadors, as well as within Imperial possessions. Whilst French Consuls in Southampton, Liverpool, and elsewhere in Britain were at liberty to send Delcassé detailed accounts of troops, supplies and horses being shipped out to South Africa, the post of British Consul in provincial France was potentially more hazardous. After a

⁷⁶³ For examples, see *MAE*, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Reverseraux (Vienna) and Patenôtre (Madrid) to Delcassé, 7 & 13 December.

⁷⁶⁴ *MAE*, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 23 October & 23 November.

⁷⁶⁵ *MAE*, CCPN, T-O, Vol 27, Louis Renault, Note pour le Ministre, 18 September 1900.

⁷⁶⁶ Irene Scobbie, *Sweden* (London, Ernest Benn Ltd: 1972), 91-92. The Norwegian parliament voted to form its own consular service in 1892 and May 1905, the recommendations of a joint committee in 1902-4 failing to achieve the agreement of both sides.

lecture sympathetic to the Boers in Bordeaux on the evening of 7 March 1900, feelings ran so high that several of the audience, reportedly shadowed by two policemen, proceeded to the nearest British Consulate to demonstrate. Stones were thrown, injuring one of the Consul's servants.⁷⁶⁷ Delcassé hastened to Monson with a private note of regret, even before asking for more details from the Ministry of the Interior.⁷⁶⁸ The incident was happily sorted out on the ground, in the sense that the Consul was mollified by the subsequent attitude of local Mayor, Prefect and police, and short prison terms for 12 of the offenders.⁷⁶⁹ Less easily pleased, Monson, noting that the demonstrators had come "fresh from listening to an inflammatory pro-Boer harangue", attacked both the authorities for allowing such lectures, and police inertia as the demonstration took place.⁷⁷⁰ Showing his determination to avoid antagonising the British, Delcassé, already on the alert for any further anti-British incidents, and keen to point out to his Prime Minister British satisfaction at how Bordeaux had been resolved, chose this juncture to declare French neutrality in the Senate.⁷⁷¹ The Ministry of Instruction was prevailed upon to publish a circular requesting that lecturers abstain from political subjects.⁷⁷² Meanwhile, further incidents occasioned by a lecture in Lyon, and in Nice, passed off more peacefully.⁷⁷³ This was in part due to a more energetic police presence.⁷⁷⁴

The Third Republic's world-wide network of Consulates included several posts in Southern Africa. Of these, the most important in the Boer War period were at Pretoria

⁷⁶⁷ Report of Walter Hearn (Bordeaux), 9 March 1900, in *MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne*, Vol 12/ *NA*, FO 27/3494.106.

⁷⁶⁸ *NA*, FO 27/3493.98, Monson to Salisbury, 8 March & *MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne*, Vol 12, Delcassé to Minister of Interior, 9 March.

⁷⁶⁹ *NA*, FO 27/3493.106, & 27/3494.121, Hearn to Monson, 9 & 17 March.

⁷⁷⁰ *NA*, FO 27/3493.101 & 27/3494.104, Monson to Salisbury, 9 & 10 March.

⁷⁷¹ *MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne*, Vol 12, Delcassé to Minister of Interior/Waldeck Rousseau, 13 & 15 March.

⁷⁷² *NA*, FO 27/3494.132, Monson to Salisbury, 25 March.

⁷⁷³ *MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne*, Vol 12, Giroud/Leroux and Minister of Interior to Delcassé, 16 & 17 March and 7 April.

⁷⁷⁴ *NA*, FO 27/3494.128, William Knott (Lyon) to Monson, 17 March, praising "measures taken by the police", whose "discreet and efficient manner" had prevented demonstrators from even reaching the Consulate.

(Transvaal), Cape Town (Cape Colony), Durban (Natal), and Laurenço-Marquês (Portuguese Mozambique) with lesser posts at Johannesburg and Bloemfontein (Orange Free State) filled for only part of the relevant period. Raffray was Consul at Cape Town. As such, despite being the furthest removed of any of the southern African Consuls from actual fighting, he (and his *Gérants*) took responsibility for sending the longest and most detailed accounts of the conflict to Paris, but was also the least troubled by it. In an environment that remained safely in British hands, Raffray was therefore capable of some sympathy for the British, notably the “spéctacle lamentable dont j’ai été témoin moi-même” of the Uitlander refugees arriving from Transvaal packed into cattle trucks.⁷⁷⁵ This did not, however, stop him from adopting a sceptical attitude towards the competence or motives of British policymakers.⁷⁷⁶

In complete contrast was the less regular, but hardly less voluminous, correspondence sent from Pretoria by Georges Aubert, who “had spent 16 years among the Boers, whose language he spoke and whose character and customs he had come to appreciate”.⁷⁷⁷ When war became imminent, Delcassé instructed the Consuls to observe both neutrality and reserve.⁷⁷⁸ This did not prevent Aubert’s daughter from training for, then engaging in, service in a Boer ambulance.⁷⁷⁹ The unquestioningly pro-Boer attitude of Aubert himself was plain from his unvarnished praise for Boer ingenuity and bravery, whilst stories of British troops raising white flags in apparent surrender to draw out Boer marksmen, then charging the Boers with bayonets, were passed on without any attempt to check them.⁷⁸⁰ Later impassioned despatches on privations within the Concentration

⁷⁷⁵ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 10, Raffray to Delcassé, 9 October 1899.

⁷⁷⁶ For example, MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 11, Raffray to Delcassé, 14 November 1899.

⁷⁷⁷ Roy McNab, *The French Colonel, Villebois-Mareuil And The Boers, 1899-1900* (London, Oxford University Press: 1975), 85.

⁷⁷⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Delcassé to Aubert/Colomies (Johannesberg), 3 & 6 October. The Germans were reported as doing the same-Vol 10, Boutiron (Berlin) to Delcassé, 10 October 1899.

⁷⁷⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vols 9 & 12, Aubert to Delcassé, 29 September & 12 December 1899.

⁷⁸⁰ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 13, Aubert to Delcassé, 22 January 1900.

camps, and Aubert's efforts to help, were equally biased in tone. These may have been carefully read in Paris, but seem to have generated no protests to London. The symbolic raising or lowering of a national flag may have been important in the Sudan in 1898, but an equally blind eye was turned by Delcassé when reports reached him of a tricolour being stolen from on top of the French Consulate in Bloemfontein on 27-8 April 1900, or when Castle Line employees got into the French Consulate at Durban on the day when Mafeking was relieved in order to raise a British flag.⁷⁸¹ Some months later, he finally got around to writing to Durban, stating that in view of the lack of any repetitions, and with no documents stolen, he was not going to pursue the matter with the British government.⁷⁸² When the Bloemfontein Consul was arrested then briefly imprisoned, and his status as a Consul in a now annexed Republic was questioned, Aubert was left to sort out a compromise with the British authorities on his own.⁷⁸³

Conclusion.

Unfortunately, Delcassé's disinclination to commit "any extended explanation of the reasoning behind his policy decisions" must leave some room for doubt in interpreting his motives and intentions.⁷⁸⁴ However, to re-consider the debate over how and when Delcassé came to favour the idea of a comprehensive settlement with Britain, the contentions of both Andrew and Venier suffer from important difficulties.

The statements made by Delcassé from September 1898 onwards, favouring the idea of closer ties to London, were numerous and recorded by various sources. Andrew's argument cannot be fully reconciled with these. Further, his case rests on the assumption that, in contrast to Fashoda, the Boer War presented the Quai d'Orsay with real choices.

⁷⁸¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Lebé (Durban)/Kampfraath (Bloemfontein) to Delcassé, 22 May, 22 August/5 September 1900.

⁷⁸² MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 30, Delcassé to Lebé, 25 October 1900.

⁷⁸³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 30, Aubert to Delcassé, 3 June 1901, the arrest having been prompted by misheard comments made by Kampfraath about British soldiers he saw escorting Boer POWs.

⁷⁸⁴ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 10.

As to whether France could have intervened on behalf of the Boers, several authors, agreeing with Lord Salisbury's view at the time, have contended that intervention in the Boer War was never practical politics, or that the actions of its protagonists were merely for show.⁷⁸⁵ In this connection, Andrew does not explain how Delcassé's well documented, strong, feelings on German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine could be squared with a desire for closer co-operation with Germany in 1898-1900 - Andrew simply assumes that they were.⁷⁸⁶ As Venier points out, that "the question of Alsace-Lorraine remained an insurmountable obstacle to any understanding between the two countries" had already been made clear to Delcassé by December 1898.⁷⁸⁷ Andrew does not acknowledge the lasting impact of German policy on the lost provinces until early March 1900, but, whether Delcassé abandoned the idea of closer links with Germany then, or earlier, what other diplomatic options did France have? True, Barrère was patiently chipping away at Italian adherence to the Triple Alliance, but neither this nor the sometimes unsatisfactory Russian Alliance could entirely counter French problems in Europe or the world. The obvious solution was to await the possibility of a reconciliation with Britain. In the meantime, Fashoda had made French policymakers well aware of how ill-equipped they were for a confrontation with Britain; even a staunch nationalist like Driant had to admit the complete vulnerability of French colonies strung out across the globe to British attack, whilst the idea of a cross-Channel invasion of metropolitan Britain remained a fantasy as long as the Royal Navy predominated. Both from the point of view of not risking a war, the brunt of which would fall on France not Germany or Russia, and keeping future options open, it was essential to avoid unnecessarily annoying the British.

⁷⁸⁵ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 276, Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia Boer War* (1981), 62, stated that Muraviev's initiative was "of a purely demonstrative nature. Its aim was to create the impression in Britain that there would be intervention".

⁷⁸⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 19.

⁷⁸⁷ Venier, "French Foreign Policy", Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 66-67.

Andrew lays great stress on the apparently uncoincidental fact of Delcassé on 28 February 1900 receiving a fresh approach from Prince Urussov on intervention in the Boer War, and discussing in cabinet new defence works in the colonies in anticipation that any future “guerre avec Angleterre, si elle ne peut être évitée, ne saurait être de notre part purement défensive”.⁷⁸⁸ Venier has shown that, by virtue of the cabinet meeting having taken place earlier in the day than the encounter with Urussov, this really was a coincidence.⁷⁸⁹ Further, Venier contends that the positions Delcassé took did not necessarily denote a hostile position against Britain. This argument would be supported by preparation for war being not something to which even Paul Cambon was averse. In December 1899 warning against complacency about British post-war intentions, he said “je ne cesserai de répéter que le meilleur moyen de vivre en bons termes avec nos ambitieux voisins est de ne négliger aucune ... précaution militaire”.⁷⁹⁰ So such preparations can be interpreted merely as the actions of prudent statesmen who, naturally ignorant of what the future might hold, were understandably determined in the context of rumours about a preventive war initiated by Britain against France to take appropriate steps to secure their own country. The same may also be said of the “anti-English twist” of the Protocol of 2 July 1900 added to the Franco-Russian Alliance, which remained “intrinsically defensive”.⁷⁹¹

That Delcassé and his peers lacked knowledge of the future is one of the principal flaws in the Delcassé line, as re-articulated by Venier. The long drawn out nature of the Boer War, and its impact on British policy, were utterly unforeseeable even in mid-1900,

⁷⁸⁸ MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne, Vol 12, Delcassé note, 28 February 1900 & Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), 171.

⁷⁸⁹ Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 72.

⁷⁹⁰ DDF 1, xvi, 63, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 23 December; Barrère, agitated by if not wholly crediting rumours of British aggressive intents from Italian politicians and Charles Dilke, agreed that the best way to avoid war was to prepare for it, and that the only way to treat with Britain was to appear strong. DDF 1, xvi, 66, Barrère to Delcassé, 31 December 1899

⁷⁹¹ Venier, “French Foreign Policy”, Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 75 & “Delcassé and Intervention”, Chassaing Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 52.

when everyone still expected a comprehensive and relatively quick British victory. In 1898-1900, with Lord Salisbury in power, unenthusiastic about definitively tying Britain to any other power, they simply had no means of knowing whether British policymakers would ever incline to the idea of any alliance. In as much as anyone in the British cabinet did, it was Chamberlain, but, much reviled in France as a Francophobe dilettante, he strongly advocated Germany, not France, as the potential ally. Again, no one could foresee that German behaviour would frustrate preliminary moves towards a wide Anglo-German agreement, leaving Britain open by 1902 to the notion of an agreement with the French, or indeed who might succeed Salisbury whether within the Conservative party or at the 1900 election. In the meantime, France needed the support of both Germany and Russia in case of a preventive war breaking out. In common with Andrew's thesis, Venier's suffers from the contradictory signals given out by Delcassé, and perhaps labours too hard, especially relative to the February-March 1900 intervention proposals, to stress that these were offers "of bons offices meant as a peaceful and friendly démarche".⁷⁹² Delcassé was well aware that previous offers of mediation had been rejected by London, and that anything less than a complete annihilation of the Boer Republics' independence would be regarded by the British as a defeat, so that any compromise would have to be forced on them.⁷⁹³ Too much is also made of the French idea for associating the USA with any approach, to stress the lack of hostility in such an intervention, as this was by way of an afterthought, and American diplomats were not involved in discussions about it.⁷⁹⁴

⁷⁹² Venier, "French Foreign Policy", Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 74 & "Delcassé and Intervention", Chassaingne Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 51.

⁷⁹³ E.g. Salisbury publicly arguing there could be no peace "so long as we leave a shred of real independent government to either republic", quoted by Catrine Clay, *King, Kaiser, Tsar Three Royal Cousins* (London, John Murray: 2006), 196.

⁷⁹⁴ Venier, "French Foreign Policy", Wilson, (ed), *International Impact* (2001), 72 & "Delcassé and Intervention", Chassaingne Dockrill, (eds), *Anglo-French Relations* (2002), 51.

For any newly appointed Foreign Minister to say “je ne voudrais pas quitter ce fauteuil sans avoir rétabli la bonne entente avec l’Angleterre”, and actually mean it in mid-1898, would have taken either remarkable foresight or an equally remarkable conceit married to formidable will power.⁷⁹⁵ In June 1898, in addition to the various other lesser niggling disputes with Britain, a clash on the Upper Nile was readily foreseeable in the next few months. However this was resolved, Anglo-French relations would take months if not years to approach the state of cordiality a prerequisite to negotiations being initiated. There was no guarantee that Delcassé would remain continually in office for long enough for any such circumstances to obtain; even Hanotaux’s four years at the Quai had suffered a six month break in 1895-6. More importantly, there were far too many imponderable factors that lay quite beyond the reach of French diplomacy. In 1898, no one could be sure that the British cabinet would come round to the idea of a general agreement, still less an alliance, at any juncture in the foreseeable future. Inasmuch as such a notion was entertained then, the preferred partner was German. The mercurial and erratic behaviour of German leaders, especially the Kaiser himself, was quite beyond anyone’s control or prediction. Had a more flexible German negotiating posture been adopted after Fashoda or in the early stages of the Boer war, a rapprochement with France, encouraged by St Petersburg, might have become plausible, dispensing with the need for a cross-Channel entente. Conversely, a less bullish determination on the part of the Kaiser and Wilhelmstrasse to squeeze London for every last possible drop of concession as the price of an alliance might up to 1901 have resulted in the Anglo-German alignment so dreaded in Paris. One must also wonder whether, had the Boers proved less doughty and succumbed to British arms within one year (as was widely expected), British policymakers, still as confident of their own strength as in autumn 1898, would have been so anxious to seek resolution of their worldwide colonial

⁷⁹⁵ Quoted by René Pinon, *France et Allemagne* (1913), 116, Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism* (1935), 555, Porter, *Career of Delcassé* (1936), 165 and Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 342.

differences with France then Russia in 1903-7, or to slip into alignment with either of the continental power blocs before 1914.

The notion that Delcassé pursued an agreement along the lines of the Entente Cordiale from the start of his time at the Quai d'Orsay should therefore be dismissed. Amidst the welter of contradictory statements and spur of the moment comments, it is difficult to trace any coherent line on an underlying ambition for Entente in 1898-1900. The most obvious feature of Delcassé's utterances and actions is the lack of consistent attitude towards Britain that they convey. It is tempting to conclude that the Minister's consistent policy was to have no consistent policy. However, what Delcassé did constantly do was to give Britain not the slightest excuse to fall out with or seek war with France, something underlined even at the height of tensions over Fashoda by what Monson praised as his calm manner-seemingly a welcome change from the more hysterical Hanotaux. Over time, this created a relationship in which it became possible for negotiations gradually to become a plausible and desirable prospect. The context-Britain's excessively hard won victory over the Boers, German diplomacy towards both France and Britain, anxiety over German military and naval strength, and both powers' desire in April 1904 not to be dragged by the Russo-Japanese War into fighting each other-further impelled the agreement made possible. Delcassé's policy could perhaps best be interpreted, in the literal sense of that word, as one of opportunism. That work towards an Entente Cordiale became possible so soon after the violent feelings stirred in France against the British and their leaders by Fashoda and the Boer War, rather than any supposed foresight and inflexible master plan, is perhaps the most remarkable achievement of Delcassé at the Quai d'Orsay.

5: A Case of Misremembered Animosity? The Paris Press and the Fashoda Incident.

Introduction.

The unfolding of the Fashoda Crisis and the diplomatic aspects of the Boer War were handled by the Quai d'Orsay to a constant background of press coverage. The importance of this should not be overestimated, inasmuch as press opinions were not, contrary what one early study implied, synonymous with public opinion.⁷⁹⁶ It is also true that, when considering the interplay between what was in the press and what people actually thought, issues of reception arise, and these ultimately are irresolvable.⁷⁹⁷ Nevertheless, and in the absence of any other mass medium so readily and immediately reflective of events of the moment, the press represents the most important gauge of the public response to what was happening in Africa.

French feelings towards Britain have often been depicted as having plumbed in autumn 1898 their greatest depths since the demise of Napoleon. The meeting of Marchand and Kitchener at Fashoda “took the mythology of Franco-British rivalry a step further” and represented “The high water mark of Anglo-French competition in Africa”.⁷⁹⁸ Chassaigne and Dockrill maintain that the “crisis may have quickly sunk into almost total oblivion in Britain, in France to mention the very word of ‘Fashoda’ has long been sufficient to unleash Anglophobia to an uncontrollable degree, along with the burning of Joan of Arc, Napoleon’s exile to St Helena or the ‘treason’ of Mers El Kebir”, leaving (according to Bell) “deep scars” on the French and a lasting, latent resentment of their

⁷⁹⁶ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), cf. the earlier Louis Martin Sears, “French Opinion of the Spanish-American War” in *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol 7.1 (Feb. 1927), 25-44, which drew not only on the press for its assessments but also French books, both of 1898 and published subsequently.

⁷⁹⁷ Anderson, *France* (1977), 142, agrees “it is particularly difficult to assess the real feeling behind the hysteria of the press”, but Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 152, opines that “the press prints what it hopes its customers will pay for... appealing to something real in the character of its readers”.

⁷⁹⁸ Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 163, and Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 360.

neighbours.⁷⁹⁹ Local councils in France lost no time in memorialising the incident by (re)naming streets.⁸⁰⁰ To this day, Rue de la Mission Marchand remains tucked quietly away in Paris' sixteenth Arrondissement, behind Avenue Mozart.⁸⁰¹ Driant ended his 1903 novel by making Marchand the new Governor of Sudan, "Lui même relever le drapeau qu'un diplomatie pusillanime avait abaissé devant le 'bluff' anglais" as part of the fictitious defeat of Britain.⁸⁰² The impression of lasting animosity is further affirmed by the world view of De Gaulle, "whose childhood had been marked by the word of 'Fashoda' uttered around him", and who still, meeting fellow countrymen whilst in exile in Britain in 1942, "kept raking over old history as though these were the days of Fashoda".⁸⁰³ Laying out his vision of France, De Gaulle's Memoirs later reflected:

Rien ne m'attristait plus profondément que nos faiblesses et nos erreurs révélées à mon enfance par les visages et les propos: abandon de Fachoda, affaire Dreyfus, conflits sociaux, discordes religieuses.⁸⁰⁴

From the other side of the wartime divide, Vichy saw the publication of what Keiger aptly described as "several hagiographies of Commandant Marchand".⁸⁰⁵ Even after the war, Fashoda wormed its way into Pierre Daninos' best-selling humorous evocation of an archetypal Englishman abroad, observing:

For a Frenchman, there are always two men in every Englishman, a good one (the Oxford-v-Cambridge one) and the bad one (the Fashoda one). Everyone knows that the really authentic enemy of France is Germany, but... the hereditary British enemy [remains] the most steadfast and cordial antagonist of the Frenchman in peace.⁸⁰⁶

⁷⁹⁹ Philippe Chassaing and Michael Dockrill, "Introduction: 'Perfide Albion' All the Way?" in their *Anglo-French Relations from Fashoda to Jospin* (Basingstoke, Palgrave: 2002), 1-2, and Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 10.

⁸⁰⁰ See *Le Matin*, 9 & 21, *Le Gaulois*, 9 October 1898 reporting that a proposal to (re)name a street Rue Fachoda was unanimously carried at the Hotel de Ville, Paris.

⁸⁰¹ Jacques Hillariet, *Dictionnaire Historique de Rues de Paris* (Paris, les Editions de Minuit: 1997), Vol 2, confirms "cette rue, ouverte en 1900, a reçu en 1901 son nom actuel". See picture 5.1.

⁸⁰² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 443.

⁸⁰³ Jean Lacouture, *De Gaulle The Rebel 1890-1944* (London, Collins Harvel: 1990), 220 & 486.

⁸⁰⁴ Charles De Gaulle, *Mémoires* (Paris, Éditions Gallimard: 2000. First published 1954), 7.

⁸⁰⁵ Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 163.

⁸⁰⁶ Pierre Daninos, *Major Thompson Lives in France* (London, Jonathan Cape: 1957, Trans. Robin Farn), 117.

Consistent with de Gaulle's retrospective sentiments, it has not been uncommon to characterise the French public of late 1898 as "stirred to a deep and resentful bitterness by a vitriolic press" in resurgence of hate for "l'ennemie héréditaire" next to whom Germany was but an accidental, temporary enemy.⁸⁰⁷ There has though more recently been some attempt to challenge the view of Fashoda as "part of a litany of incidents said to characterise Anglo-French rivalry and conflict from Waterloo to Mers-El-Kébir and with it justification for latent Anglophobia", asserting instead that the French response was surprisingly moderate.⁸⁰⁸

The Paris Press in 1898.

This crisis coincided with the middle of what many regarded as "the golden era of the press" in France.⁸⁰⁹ Fuelled by technical innovation, increased levels of education and therefore literacy, and the prolonged impact of the more liberal press laws of 1881 (but before the advent of radio), the papers held a unique place of influence.

Press reports might be expected to be at the forefront of the "violent flare-up of nationalism in Paris" widely attributed to Fashoda.⁸¹⁰ Smith affirms that in Britain and France, up to 1898 tensions over colonies were exacerbated by the media, "almost exclusively represented by the press; newspapers played a large part in determining public attitudes and in setting the mood of the country were capable of influencing government decisions".⁸¹¹ Press power was reflected in the diversity of papers available and numbers sold. Though information on press circulation figures is patchy, they rose

⁸⁰⁷ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), ix, Jacques Chastenet, *Histoire de la Troisième République La République Triomphante 1893-1906* (Paris, Hachette: 1955), 158 and *L'Echo de Paris*, 3 November 1898 cited by Wright. See Picture 5.2.

⁸⁰⁸ Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 163.

⁸⁰⁹ Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 223.

⁸¹⁰ Alistair Horne, *Friend or Foe An Anglo-Saxon History of France* (London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson: 2005), 268.

⁸¹¹ Smith, *Unknown Frenchman* (2001), 40-41.

from around one million in 1870 to 5 million by 1910.⁸¹² By this juncture, the press was dominated by the big four, in order of circulation *Le Petit Parisien*, *Le Petit Journal*, *Le Journal* and *Le Matin*. It was, further, not the case that the influence of these four was limited to the capital; provincial sales of all of them commonly ran somewhere in excess of 60% of their total circulations.⁸¹³

Table 1: Circulation of Selected Titles from the Paris Press.

Newspaper/Date of Founding.	Circulation: July 1880.⁸¹⁴	Circulation: November 1910.⁸¹⁵
<i>La Libre Parole.</i> 1892	-	47,000
<i>L'Autorité.</i> 1886	-	24,000
<i>L'Intransigeant.</i> 1880	71,601	70,000
<i>Le Soleil.</i> 1873	45,190	24,000
<i>L'Echo de Paris.</i> 1884	-	120,000
<i>Le Figaro.</i> 1854	104,922	37,000
<i>Le Gaulois.</i> 1868	14,854	30,000
<i>Journal des Débats.</i> 1795	6,935	26,000
<i>Le Temps.</i> 1861	22,764	36,000
<i>Le Petit Journal.</i> 1863	583,820	835,000
<i>Le Matin.</i> 1884	-	670,000
<i>Le Radical.</i> 1871-2 & 1881	-	29,000
<i>L'Aurore.</i> 1897	-	8,500
<i>Le Siècle.</i> 1836	15,082	5,000
<i>La Lanterne.</i> 1868	150,531	33,000
<i>La Petite République.</i> 1871	196,372	67,000

An “Official” Press.

On the other side of the Channel, *Le Temps* was the most “credited with close relations with the French foreign office”.⁸¹⁶ Even its rivals in Paris conceded it special status as prime source for “les informations officieuses”, and it was indeed among those co-operating with Delcassé to publish what he wanted.⁸¹⁷ However, it was by no means the

⁸¹² Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 690 for figures, Claude Bellanger, Jacques Godechot, Pierre Guiral, Fernand Terrou, *Histoire Générale de la Presse Française* (Paris, Presses Universitaires De France: 1972), 62-103 for detailed developments in printing.

⁸¹³ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 298-299.

⁸¹⁴ Figures, based on police reports, in Bellanger, *Presse Française*, (1972), 234.

⁸¹⁵ Figures, from Archives Nationales, in Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 296.

⁸¹⁶ *Times*, 3 October 1898.

⁸¹⁷ *Gaulois*, 4 November 1898. See also Hutton, *Historical Dictionary*, (1986), 691, and Andrew, *Delcassé*, (1968), 67, elaborating also on the care with which Delcassé dictated to his press secretary items for publication.

only daily paper to be used by those in the highest ranks of government in this way. Daily circulation figures of *Le Temps*, at 30,000 in 1884 and 35,000 in 1904, came to be dwarfed by *Le Matin*, from 33,000 copies per day in 1887 rising to 100,000 in 1900.⁸¹⁸ One relevant factor was a writing style on the part of *Le Temps* that was widely regarded as leaden, if not actually boring in comparison to the paper taken as its closest rival.⁸¹⁹ *Le Matin* was further distinguished not only by having an exceptionally high proportion of foreign news in its columns but also as being a forum in which Delcassé felt inclined to float less formal “Trial Balloons” than would be possible if they had the weight of *Le Temps* behind them.⁸²⁰ He avoided personally having to bear the weight of direct public castigation if his ideas were rejected or proved unpopular. Britain’s ambassador in Paris was privately under no illusions about *Le Matin* serving as “mouthpiece” for the Minister for Foreign Affairs.⁸²¹

The Four “feuilles de qualité”.

In addition to *Le Temps*, *Le Journal Des Débats*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Gaulois* had circulation levels below those of the big four but were noted for the quality of their reporting.⁸²² Unlike *Le Matin*, which made a point of opening its editorial columns to writers of widely differing political sympathies, *Le Gaulois* was unashamedly partisan in tone, Bonapartist in 1871 and rallying to Boulanger in 1888-9. Although its columns were also employed by ministers from time to time, this paper was self-consciously aimed at a less universal constituency than *Le Matin*, bearing as it did a distinctively royalist tone by 1898.⁸²³ Reverence for royalty also extended to a more general

⁸¹⁸ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 352 for *Le Temps*, 310 & 311 for *Le Matin*.

⁸¹⁹ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 352, and Hayne, *French Foreign Office*, (1993), 45.

⁸²⁰ Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 36, Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 47, and Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 67.

⁸²¹ BDW, 1, 175, Monson to Salisbury, 7 October 1898 and Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 168, & 67-68, Hayne *French Foreign Office* (1993), 48, particularising Delcassé’s relations with *Le Matin* journalists Henri Laurent his friend, and Henry des Houx who occasionally acted as the Minister’s agent.

⁸²² Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 316.

⁸²³ *Le Gaulois* opened its columns to the Duc d’Orléans, whose recall from exile and to power was more than obliquely advocated in an article concluding “Malgré tout, si le providence le veut...”- *Le Gaulois*, 20 September & 8 October 1898. Also contrast *Le Gaulois*’ detailed description of the Queen of

veneration for any elevated social status of conservative origin.⁸²⁴ Although also conservative in tone, formerly monarchist *Le Figaro* was suffering from a defection of readers to *Le Gaulois* and *L'Echo de Paris*, thanks to the pro-Dreyfus pieces it published from 14 November to 4 December 1897.⁸²⁵ Whereas *Le Figaro* was down to 20,000 copies a day by 1901, circulations in the region of 30,000 at the time of Fashoda gave *Le Gaulois* a significantly farther reach.⁸²⁶ Both *Le Journal Des Débats* and *Le Figaro* printed material directly furnished by Delcassé.⁸²⁷

The Nationalist Press.

To the right of the broadly conservative “feuilles de qualité” were numerous other avowedly partisan papers, not specifically aimed at an establishment or haute-bourgeois audience. *Le Soleil*, Royalist and aristocratic in tone, was in decline, suffering from the effects of a more radical right wing press.⁸²⁸ *L'Echo de Paris*, from 1892 the organ of the Ligue des Patriotes, had military influences and rose in popularity.⁸²⁹ However, many of the sharply nationalist papers, not always economically viable, fared less well and tended to be dominated by a single editor, like Paul De Cassagnac’s Bonapartist *L'Autorité*.⁸³⁰ *L'Intransigeant* mirrored the political evolution of Rochefort, from the left, via Boulangism, to nationalism and anti-Semitism by 1898-1900.⁸³¹ Most violently anti-Semitic was *La Libre Parole*, edited by Edouard Drumont and in halting decline.⁸³²

Denmark’s funeral, painstakingly listing royal, diplomatic and political figures in attendance, supplemented by an affectionate story about the Queen on its front page, to the small amount of space devoted to the deceased elsewhere: *Le Gaulois*, 16 & 17 October, *Le Matin*, 16 October 1898.

⁸²⁴ This even included British pageantry and historical tradition, potentially controversially when the city of London honoured Kitchener for his exploits in the Sudan. *Le Gaulois*, 6 November 1898.

⁸²⁵ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 347 & 349 and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 47.

⁸²⁶ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 349 for *Le Figaro*, 322 for *Le Gaulois*.

⁸²⁷ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 67.

⁸²⁸ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 321, attributing to the paper’s pro-Dreyfus stance the initial decline in circulation, from 40,000 in 1897.

⁸²⁹ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 346, also stating circulation of 53,000 in 1897 and 105,000 in 1906.

⁸³⁰ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 318.

⁸³¹ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 317 and 341, asserting a usual circulation of around 30,000.

⁸³² Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 343, citing a circulation of 60,000 in 1904, although Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 62, argued for the paper’s continuing influence in coverage of Dreyfus; “the press of the right...took its lead from the anti-Semitic *La Libre Parole*” in “underlining the role of the German Embassy in the affair” in early 1898, so drumming up popular fear of Germany.

The Press of the Left.

As prolific in the number of its titles as the right, this has tended to be neglected by historians examining Anglo-French relations in 1898-1902. As well as the more colourful invective employed against Britain by the nationalist press, this is perhaps, due to the left's reputed preoccupation with French domestic affairs.⁸³³ Of the Radical Republicans, the best covered has been the firmly Dreyfusard *Le Siècle*, due to the singularly Anglophile attitude displayed during Fashoda and the Boer War by Yves Guyot, its editor from 1892. Its level of interest in foreign affairs was unusual but, despite a proportionately large dissemination to provincial France, its circulation was in decline and dwarfed by *L'Aurore*, *La Voltaire* and *Le Radical*.⁸³⁴

Further to the left were Socialist papers such as *La Petite République* and *La Lanterne*. Both were well behind the big four but *La Petite République* compared better with the four "feuilles de qualité". It was a paper in a state of perpetual flux, known as *La Petite République Française* until 1893 when its Radical stance was abandoned. At the time of Fashoda, the ensuing infighting in a lull, *La Petite République* had opened its columns to all shades of Socialist opinion.⁸³⁵ Its infrequent citation in secondary literature may be attributable to the view that Socialists of the 1890s took little active interest in foreign affairs.⁸³⁶ Contrary to what its relative neglect by historians might lead one to expect, *La Petite République* did come to air a distinctive voice of its own as the Fashoda crisis

⁸³³ For example, Jean Touchard, *La Gauche en France Depuis 1900* (Paris, editions de Seuil: 1981), 44 & 46 remarked on Combes' complete lack of any ideas on foreign policy, adding for the post 1895 period that all radical candidates for the National Assembly were preoccupied by local affairs.

⁸³⁴ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 316 & 357; *Le Radical* with 40,000 copies per day in 1885 was about twice as popular as *Le Siècle*.

⁸³⁵ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 373-374. *La Petite République* enjoyed contributions from Guesde, to Jaurès (editorials on 14, 18, 22, 23, 27 September, 1, 4, 7, 8, 15, 16, 18 & 20 October) and Viviani (editorials on 13, 24, 29 September, 5, 12, 19 October 1898).

⁸³⁶ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), 194, stressed that the socialist party of the 1890s "did not for some years concern itself seriously with... foreign affairs".

unfolded, even if the individual readers targeted were not as politically influential as those of the *feuilles de qualité* or *Le Matin*.

In addition to the general daily press, specific interest papers such as *La Dépêche Coloniale*, the most important of some 32 publications dedicated to promoting colonialism, were influential.⁸³⁷ British Ambassador in Paris Edmond Monson, repeatedly supplied by the British military attaché Dawson with disturbing examples of Anglophobe sentiment in *France Militaire*, a journal directed at the army, dutifully forwarded these to London.⁸³⁸ It is, however, less easy to quantify what popular reach these enjoyed in the absence of circulation figures or, necessarily, in the case of the Parti Colonial, a desire to achieve a genuinely popular audience. Although not generally daily publications, satirical magazines like *L'Illustration* or *Le Rire* enjoyed growing popularity in the 1890s.⁸³⁹

The Sample.

Le Temps having already been covered comprehensively by Keiger, the remainder of this chapter will concentrate on four Paris papers' approach to the Fashoda Incident. The first of these, *Le Matin*, was distinguished both by fact of its being in "the big four" and carrying an unusually high proportion of foreign news generally. *Le Gaulois* entered Keiger's "roll call of this chauvinistic press", whereas *Le Figaro* did not.⁸⁴⁰ By virtue of the nature and the extent of coverage given to Fashoda, these two are of interest because they illustrate both the seamless melding, and therefore shifts possible, between Bourgeois, stridently "Nationalist", and conservative attitudes. They further suggest that during the crisis itself Anglophobic expressions were surprisingly modest. Finally,

⁸³⁷ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 384.

⁸³⁸ E.G,NA, FO 27/3397.36, Monson to Salisbury, 30 September and FO 27/3397.196, same to same, 27 October 1898.

⁸³⁹ Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 386 & 387. Circulation levels of *L'Illustration* reached 48,000 in 1899.

⁸⁴⁰ Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 166.

representing the Left, *La Petite République* incorporated the widest range of Socialist views and enjoyed the farthest reach.

Fashoda and the French Press.

The months up to September 1898 saw a general lack of coverage of Marchand and events in Sudan, or commentary when factual reports were published.⁸⁴¹ Brown advises that “during the first 3 weeks of September, the Dreyfus affair still captured the headlines but interest in the changing situation in the Sudan had begun to rise”, with the first commentaries after Kitchener’s victory over the Mahdists.⁸⁴² Coverage of Fashoda as a crisis therefore originated in French press reports of the battle of Omdurman, followed by rumours that a European expedition was present to the south of Kitchener’s Anglo-Egyptian forces.

The table illustrates the amount of press column space given to Fashoda over 10 weeks, from the period directly preceding the crisis until the week after its conclusion.⁸⁴³ Ironically, for an incident of such reputed gravity and lasting resonance, up to the end of the crisis period on 3 November only in one week did coverage in any of the papers exceed 8% of the available space. This was in *Le Matin*, its emphasis on foreign affairs borne out by its average of 5.33% space on Fashoda and the Sudan, relative to *Le Figaro* and *Le Gaulois* at 3.75% and 3.48% respectively. In editorials dealing substantially with Fashoda, there was a more even match between *Le Matin*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Gaulois*, at

⁸⁴¹ Arié, “L’Opinion Publique”, *Revue d’Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 344-346, and Keiger, “Franco-British Relations”, Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest*, (1998), 167-170, exclusively covering *Le Temps*.

⁸⁴² Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered*, (1970), 86.

⁸⁴³ *Le Matin*, *Le Gaulois* and *La Petite République* had 4 pages, with 6 columns per page. On the basis that (in common with most papers) their fourth pages in their entirety were almost invariably given over to shares, finance, theatre, sport and advertisements, and would therefore never have covered Fashoda (or rival political news stories) these fourth pages have been omitted for the purposes of this quantitative analysis. The maximum potential coverage therefore amounted to 126 columns across each period of 7 days. *Le Figaro* also carried 6 columns per page, but had 6 pages. For similar reasons, the fifth and sixth pages of *Le Figaro* have not been taken into account, so yielding a maximum of 168 columns per 7 days. Were these pages to be included, the results would militate even further in the direction of the Fashoda crisis having been of only peripheral importance to the French press at the time of the crisis itself.

five editorials each (out of a possible 70). Showing least interest with 1.225% column space and only three editorials was *La Petite République*.

Table 2: Press Space Covering the Battle of Omdurman and the Fashoda Crisis.

Week of:	Le Matin	Le Gaulois	Le Figaro	La Petite République.
1-7 September	2.66 columns/ 2.11%	2 columns/ 1.59%	2.2 columns/ 1.31%	0.83 columns/ 0.66%
8-14 September	3.87 columns/ 3.07%	1.66 columns/ 1.32%	4.93 columns/ 2.93%	0.2 columns/ 0.16%
15-21 September	6.53 columns/ 5.18%	2.58 columns/ 2.05%	4.18 columns/ 2.49%	1.5 columns/ 1.19%
22-28 September	3.37 columns/ 2.67%	2.12 columns/ 1.68%	5.73 columns/ 3.41%	0.75 columns/ 0.6%
29 September-5 October	2.6 columns/ 2.06%	2.95 columns/ 2.34%	3.56 columns/ 2.12%	0.33 columns/ 0.26%
6-12 October	7.65 columns/ 6.07%	4.83 columns/ 3.83%	4.5 columns/ 2.68%	0.53 columns/ 0.42%
13-19 October	4.25 columns/ 3.37%	4.92 columns/ 3.9%	6.62 columns/ 3.94%	0.45 columns/ 0.38%
20-26 October	15.55 columns/ 12.34%	7.92 columns/ 6.28%	12.32 columns/ 7.33%	3.25 columns/ 2.58%
27 October-2 November	7.0 columns/ 5.56%	5.12 columns/ 4.1%	6.9 columns/ 4.11%	1.45 columns/ 1.15%
3-9 November	13.73 columns/ 10.90%	9.82 columns/ 7.79%	12.03 columns/ 7.16%	6.17 columns/ 4.85%

The amount of press coverage at any juncture was only partially determined by the availability of hard news relevant to Fashoda. Initial reports from Dervish POWs, who had participated in the attack on Fashoda, suggested that the Europeans defending the fort were French, as did the nature of the bullets found in the hull of the Dervish gunboats.⁸⁴⁴ Even before it was certain, the French press, including *Le Journal des Débats* and *Le Temps*, despite their reserve, were quick to jump to the conclusion that Marchand was present at Fashoda.⁸⁴⁵ British papers quoted from freely by *Le Matin*

⁸⁴⁴ Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 129, *Le Matin* 11 September, *La Petite République* 12 September. In the form of a report copied from *The Daily Telegraph*, containing an interview with the Dervish captain, these rumours percolated through to *Le Gaulois*, 17 September 1898.

⁸⁴⁵ *Le Temps*, 14 September, *Le Journal des Débats*, 20 September.

made similar assumptions.⁸⁴⁶ Stimulated by the bullish tone of their British peers, the French press proved eager to argue over the rights and wrongs of a possible French occupation of the upper Nile well before the facts had been confirmed.⁸⁴⁷ Nevertheless, confrontation over a far off fort in central Africa continued to struggle for column space, especially with the Dreyfus case and strikes in Paris. Indeed, reports of Anglo-French military co-operation, keeping the peace between Greeks and Turks in Crete, at first appeared almost as frequently as Fashoda.⁸⁴⁸ Most absorbed by other news, especially ongoing developments on Dreyfus, was *La Petite République*.⁸⁴⁹ Reports of the battle of Omdurman appeared a day after those of *Le Matin*, and were word for word similar.⁸⁵⁰ Remaining space was later on dominated by news of the navvies' strike and ensuing wider industrial unrest, supported by it and *L'Aurore*.⁸⁵¹

By the time confirmation of the encounter on the Nile had percolated through to the journalists, the press had exhausted itself, coverage in three papers of Fashoda actually falling in the fourth week of September then into October. The slight rise in coverage from 6-12 October and, more emphatically, from 20-26 October is explained as much by the publications of government documents, from which the papers were able to reproduce verbatim extracts, as by the fulsomeness of the journalists' commentaries.⁸⁵² Following another lull from 27 October-2 November during which the fall of the Brisson cabinet and the formation of its successor preoccupied the newspapers, it was in

⁸⁴⁶ *Le Matin*, 12, 13 & 14 September.

⁸⁴⁷ E.G. *Le Gaulois*, 19 & 20 September, *Le Matin*, 14 September.

⁸⁴⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 21 & 23 September, 1 October, *Le Matin*, 14, 15 & 24 October. In *Le Temps*, 23 September, these reports were tempered by criticism of "l'aveugle condescendance du colonel Chermiside" towards Christians being killed in Heraklion, a blind eye put down to imperial rivalry with Russia.

⁸⁴⁹ This was reflected in the amount of column space devoted to the case and army, including editorials: on 1, 2, 3 & 5 September over 50% of pages 1 & 2 of this 4 page paper were devoted to Dreyfus, likewise on 24th & 26th over 7 out of the 12 columns on pages 1 & 2, and on 19th September it was over 9 columns, with 2.5 columns or more on the strike on the 3 later days.

⁸⁵⁰ *Le Matin*, 5 September, *La Petite République*, 6 September.

⁸⁵¹ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 91 & 102-105.

⁸⁵² A first British Blue Book was subject of précis and quotations in *Le Matin*, 10 & *Le Gaulois*, 11 October, then followed by a Quai d'Orsay Yellow Book and a second British Blue Book to fill the columns of *Le Matin* & *Le Gaulois*, 24 & 25 October.

the week after Marchand's withdrawal was decided that coverage of Fashoda peaked. By this stage, it was too late for commentary to have any effect on the outcome of the crisis, making opinions not the less bitter, and tending to affirm the status of Fashoda as an episode that excited more interest and animosity with hindsight than at the time.

Views of Britain and the British through the Fashoda Crisis.

If the quantity of press reporting during Fashoda does not match the expectations that might be raised by some subsequent depictions of the feelings raised by the incident, what about its content? Keiger is not the only one to have recognised that elements of the Paris press showed some moderation at points during the crisis.⁸⁵³ Whilst outright hostility to Britain and anger over Fashoda could be expected from *La Libre Parole*, *L'Intransigeant* and *L'Autorité*, the attitudes of *Le Figaro* and *Le Gaulois*, surprisingly if not always consistently, struck a note of restraint. Their stances together with that of *Le Matin* were not least influenced by the Parti Colonial. By late September 1898, Etienne's lead, contending that the time had now come for "serious diplomatic negotiations" over the entire future of Egypt, had been followed by much of the right wing press (*Le Gaulois*, *Le Soleil*, *La Patrie* and *L'éclair*), "as well as influential moderate journals like *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps* and *Le Matin*".⁸⁵⁴ Government attitudes were more important, if lacking in consistency. Minister of Marine Trouillot summoned a *Le Gaulois* journalist to Pavillon de Flore to brief him on otherwise undisclosed facts on Marchand and Kitchener's encounter. The "sharply anti British" article generated on 28 September overruled efforts of both foreign ministers "to keep the details of their

⁸⁵³ For example Arié, "L'Opinion Publique", *Revue d'Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 344-363 and Sanderson, *Upper Nile* (1965), 348.

⁸⁵⁴ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 86, CF. Arié, "L'Opinion Publique" in *Revue d'Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 345-6.

discussions on the level of cabinet diplomacy”, prompting increased public debate and, in October, rival publications of Blue books and a Yellow book.⁸⁵⁵

Meanwhile, Monson observed to Salisbury on 30 September that “I have noticed latterly an increase in the bitterness against England even in the newspapers that may be called serious whilst the journals of the meaner sort indulge more than ever in scurrilous attacks upon us”.⁸⁵⁶ The Delcassé inspired defiance of “La Seule Réponse Digne de la France” on 5 October was forwarded to London by the British ambassador.⁸⁵⁷ Continuing a close watch on subsequent publications, he complained of “the irresponsible press on this side of the water”, succumbing like British papers to “opinions of the type to which, in the current vernacular, the epithet ‘jingo’ has been consecrated”.⁸⁵⁸ An abrupt change was signalled by *Matin* on 10 October, the Delcassé inspiration behind it acknowledged by Monson who commented that “in view of the tone previously adopted by that organ... [it] almost verges on the ludicrous, so sudden and complete is the change of front taken up. ‘The abandonment of Fashoda is perfectly compatible with the preservation of the national honour’; such is the pith of the article”.⁸⁵⁹ *Le Matin* had indeed gone so far as to suggest that Marchand’s potential acquisitions were about as accessible, and as useful to other French colonies, as mountains on the moon.⁸⁶⁰ This cry, as Monson put it, was subsequently taken up by “the whole pack”, or much of it, for the very next day he was able to report that the tone of the French press (in contrast to London’s) had “become singularly moderate”.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁵⁵ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 98, CF. Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 145-146 & 153-154. Trouillot, a rival of Delcassé, had still been smarting from the 26 September cabinet decision over Fashoda, which he considered insufficiently assertive.

⁸⁵⁶ NA, FO 27/3397.36, Monson to Salisbury, 30 September.

⁸⁵⁷ *Le Matin*, 5 October and NA, FO 27/3397.53, Monson to Salisbury, 5 October.

⁸⁵⁸ BDW, 1, 175, Monson to Salisbury, 7 October.

⁸⁵⁹ BDW, 1, 178, Monson to Salisbury, 10 October.

⁸⁶⁰ *Le Matin*, 10 October.

⁸⁶¹ BDW, 1, 178 & 179, Monson to Salisbury, 10 & 11 October.

On the left, the approach taken towards Fashoda throughout was mixed in tone. Among

the radical titles, *Le Siècle* condemned the entire Upper Nile project as ‘senseless’ and demanded Marchand’s immediate recall.⁸⁶² As for *L’Aurore*, “there was never any doubt of the journal’s opposition to colonial expansion and its advocacy of a conciliatory line toward Great Britain”.⁸⁶³ Clemenceau’s 25 October “Méditations sur Fachoda” maintained that France should not fight for the marshes of Fashoda whilst Metz and Strasbourg remained in German hands.⁸⁶⁴

Where the right could interpret Britain’s victory over the Mahdists as one of European civilisation as a whole, the joint civilisation and codes of conduct ascribed to Britain and France were modified in two ways on the Socialist left. However, they still essentially identified British and French interests and ideas with each other. Firstly the use or morality of colonisation *per se* was challenged. In *Petite République*, Maxence Rhodes’ analysis of the incident, attributing divisions of class more importance than those of nation, questioned the value of colonies at all for the happiness or wealth of “la masse travailleuse au lui laissera l’honneur de fournir des victimes au charnier coloniale”. Having wondered at the benefit of owning Fashoda to the workers and unemployed of France (or Leeds, London and Manchester) Rhodes concluded that “le conflit n’est pas entre deux peuples, mais entre deux minorités capitalistes”.⁸⁶⁵ The paper went on to give support to British socialists opposed to government policy, in a visceral antipathy for “les marchands de rhum falsifié...les trafiquants de munitions de guerre, de ‘cant’...les financiers” on both sides of the channel, as well as the mostly anti-Dreyfusard

⁸⁶² Arié, “L’Opinion Publique”, *Revue d’Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 353, adding that *Le Lyon Républicain*, 18 October, agreed that “L’hypothèse d’un conflit entre deux grandes puissances civilisées pour la possession des marécages malsains de Fachoda serait absurde”.

⁸⁶³ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 107.

⁸⁶⁴ Carroll, *French Public Opinion* (1931), 174 & Arié, “L’Opinion Publique”, *Revue d’Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 354.

⁸⁶⁵ *La Petite République*, 21 September.

chauvinists of the French press.⁸⁶⁶ Rhodes doubted that “une tâche tout d’humanité et de justice” in Sudan would be undertaken by a Britain that had already depopulated Tasmania, left India in famine and massacred natives in South Africa. In his opinion, various massacres and “nos brigandages coloniaux” left France in no better position to claim civilising influence; both countries had equal title-or lack of it- to civilise the Sudan.⁸⁶⁷

The second and less drastic line implied a separation from other European powers. France and Britain were the two nations of Liberalism and progress. As the crisis wore on, *La Petite République*’s emphasis changed to one of standing for the sacred interests of humanity by not putting to death the world’s largest liberal power for the sake of a few wind-blown areas of sand.⁸⁶⁸ If resentment of British policy was not absent from *La Petite République*, latterly it was deemed more important to avoid “une guerre fratricide” fatal to worldwide ideas of liberty, and to demand peace, accompanied by a dissipation of the prejudices or secret animosities shown by both peoples towards each other.⁸⁶⁹

Press criticism of British policies on Fashoda varied, from cartoons to dissection of the inconsistencies of successive public comments of British statesmen on the upper Nile, published on 12 December by *Le Figaro*.⁸⁷⁰ Debate of such specific points was framed within a wider context of public attitudes towards Britain which also assumed prominence during the crisis. Persistent speculations as to a preventive war started by

⁸⁶⁶ *La Petite République*, 28 September.

⁸⁶⁷ *La Petite République*, 1 October.

⁸⁶⁸ *La Petite République*, 21 October. This stance was mirrored in *The Truth*, quoted in *Le Gaulois*, 3 November, stating that, as France was the sole democracy on the continent, only autocrats would rejoice at an Anglo-French war.

⁸⁶⁹ *La Petite République*, 3 & 4 November.

⁸⁷⁰ *Le Figaro*, 12 December.

the British became more credible in the case of a country whose situation had recently been described by *Le Figaro* as follows:

L'Angleterre s'ennuie au milieu de sa splendeur. Elle est puissante comme elle ne l'a jamais été. Chaque année elle s'arrondit sa domaine coloniale des nouvelles conquêtes, et comme tout lui réussit, on a peine à découvrir ce qui lui manque... Elle se plaint, elle gémit et elle reclame de son gouvernement des allures plus bruyantes et moins pacifiques.⁸⁷¹

Several tropes about Britain repeatedly cropped up in the French press during the Fashoda crisis:

1. British Arrogance, Brutality and Treachery.

Across the nineteenth century, Britain was commonly portrayed as overbearing, arrogant, aiming to dominate the globe through “l’empire absolu et exclusif des mers”.⁸⁷² Such ideas drew on long memories. For example, in a hypothetical situation calling to mind the 1851 Don Pacifico incident, *Le Figaro* imagined a British, a Russian and a French sailor in Odessa; were the latter to be slapped across the face the French ambassador would claim compensation from the Tsar, but any insult to the Briton would result in a fleet arriving to bombard the town. The willingness of the Russian sailor to provoke such retribution lay in the fact that he had never seen a ship in his entire career, whilst in sorry contrast to the French sailor:

Le mot du matelot anglais est admirable. C’est le mot du Romain autrefois. ‘Civis sum Romanus’...L’anglais de même et de là son audace à marcher de l’avant sa superbe confiance à se jeter à travers toutes les résistances.⁸⁷³

This self-confidence was linked to older allegations of behind-the-scenes British treachery. The seventeenth century charge of “Perfide Albion” found fresh life in the circumstances of 1898. British sympathies for the USA during the Spanish-American War had elicited “much bitterness” in France, the suspicion that the Americans would

⁸⁷¹ *Le Figaro*, 13 May 1898.

⁸⁷² *Le Matin*, 5 September. See also editions for 14 September, 6 & 29 October.

⁸⁷³ *Le Figaro*, 24 September. On French naval weakness, see also Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 189.

sell the Philippines to Britain, and that the British had compromised the moral unity of Europe.⁸⁷⁴ Before and after Fashoda, *Le Journal des Débats* openly blamed British propagandists for US-French estrangement.⁸⁷⁵ Explicitly linking the conflict to British policy towards France, *Le Gaulois* published claims that British money was behind the war, and efforts to exacerbate French internal difficulties.⁸⁷⁶ Conveniently overlooking their own government's agency in authorising the Marchand mission, *Le Matin* and *Le Petit Journal* seriously maintained that Britain had deliberately chosen the moment of highest internal dissent within France to defeat the Mahdi, and assert their dominance in the Nile Valley.⁸⁷⁷ They did not go as far as *L'Autorité* in asserting that Britain, once it had gone to the trouble of enormous war preparations, would take the opportunity to burn Brest and Cherbourg without first bothering to declare war.⁸⁷⁸ However, even the more restrained *Le Matin* wondered if words of friendship uttered by British statesmen during the crisis would prove to be real, or pretence.⁸⁷⁹ *Le Gaulois* feared British treachery in Abyssinia, a kingdom whose ill defined boundaries abutted the upper Nile to the east.⁸⁸⁰ The British were accused by *Le Matin* of having pushed a tribal chieftain to rebel against the Negus, possibly in collaboration with Italy against whom the French had secretly armed the Abyssinians.⁸⁸¹

⁸⁷⁴ Various publications, cited by Sears, "French Opinion", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol 7.1 (1927), 34, 36 & 37.

⁸⁷⁵ *Le Journal des Débats*, 11 May & 15 November 1898, cited by Sears, "French Opinion", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Vol 7.1 (1927), 37-38.

⁸⁷⁶ Officer interviewed in *Le Gaulois*, 19 October.

⁸⁷⁷ *Le Matin*, 7 September and *Le Petit Journal*, 8 November.

⁸⁷⁸ *L'Autorité*, quoted by *Le Matin*, 3 November.

⁸⁷⁹ *Le Matin*, 1 November.

⁸⁸⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 19 October & 3 November. Henri Duc d'Orléans was not alone in believing that King Menelik was an ally and a friend of France, but see Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 45, Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 190 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 77-79 on how Menelik's friendship was extremely limited in nature, if not purely superficial.

⁸⁸¹ *Le Matin*, 16 & 18 October. The arms were supplied in return for a promise to help in getting a French expedition from Djibouti in the east to meet Marchand at Fashoda- Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 44-45. British motivation was supplied by the geo political obstacle that Abyssinia supposedly formed to a possible railway strung across British controlled territory in the continent of Africa from the Cape to Cairo- *Le Gaulois*, 22 October.

Allied with underhand actions against France and its sympathisers were portrayals of British brutality, demonstrating Anglo-French differences as well as the dangers of opposing Britain. Kitchener personified a thirst for blood, one report stating that he was presented with the Mahdi's embalmed head to serve as an inkpot, another that an officer had taken it for public display in the British Museum. It may not have been true that all Britons welcomed such acts, but *Le Matin*'s concluding observation that "John Bull sera ravi" presumably corresponded with what many French believed, or wanted to believe.⁸⁸² The British civilian population was depicted as keen on bloodshed for the sake of it, wishing there had been more carnage at Omdurman.⁸⁸³ The idea that sections of the British public mourned the small size of "the butcher's bill" was sufficiently prominent to attract the attention of Monson, who seems to have been especially pained by it in his despatch to London about reactions to the battle.⁸⁸⁴ An attitude of taking war as good sport was apparent from the publication in Britain of odds for or against war, which reached French papers.⁸⁸⁵

Arrogance, brutality and treachery might excite French antipathy, but, equally, could work to vindicate Delcassé's decision to withdraw Marchand. They were combined in the press with other stereotypical characteristics, a certain temperamental distance and coldness, or *sang froid*.⁸⁸⁶ Married with traits of thoroughness, so recently displayed in the Sudan campaign, and "le sens pratique inhérent à la race", these made the British a

⁸⁸² *Le Matin*, 29 October. See also Hugh Cecil, "British Correspondents and the Sudan Campaign of 1896-1898" in Edward Spiers, (ed), *Sudan The Reconquest Reappraised* (London, Frank Cass Publishers: 1998), 120, & endnote 126 for further "lurid rumours" as to the fate of the Mahdi's head, and British domestic objections to the disrespect shown to the body/Dervish prisoners by the Anglo-Egyptian army. Neillands, *Dervish Wars* (1996), 213, 215-216 clarified that, on Cromer's advice, Kitchener discretely buried the head at Wadi Halfa on his way back to Cairo.

⁸⁸³ *Le Matin*, 6 September, consistent with Bardoux, *crises belliqueuses* (1906), 11, later criticising the brutality of their football and boxing matches.

⁸⁸⁴ NA, FO 27/3396.438, Monson to Salisbury, 6 September.

⁸⁸⁵ *Le Matin*, 21 October.

⁸⁸⁶ *Le Figaro*, 4 October, *Le Gaulois*, 29 September, *Le Matin*, 22 October on the *sang-froid* of Kitchener's army, and 3 November, presenting British *sang froid* as "son arme de défense la plus précieuse".

worrying potential antagonist.⁸⁸⁷ This characterisation possibly suited Delcassé as the best way to vindicate the policy he felt bound to adopt on Fashoda. Withdrawal in the face of certain destruction from a homicidal nation became inevitable, and therefore excusable.⁸⁸⁸

Opposed in temperament to Britain, France was portrayed as a small, harmless, victim.⁸⁸⁹ This trope was most pronounced in the cartoon on the front of *Le Petit Journal Illustré*, depicting France in the feminine, childish role of Miss Red Riding Hood, about to present an object marked “Fashoda” to a creature in bed bearing a face mask of an old ugly old crone with large teeth, its military helmet clearly visible against a bed curtain made of a Royal navy ensign, and its paws/sharp claws resting poised on the bed spread.⁸⁹⁰ The press happily gave licence to bestial imagery when assessing British ambitions, overlooking the actually somewhat diffident attitude to acquiring more colonies shown by some in government.⁸⁹¹ On the face of it, therefore, Fashoda afforded the opportunity for the press to attack British arrogance and brutality.

2. Lessons from the Past.

Behind the mutual antipathy epitomised by Fashoda stood centuries of history cited in many papers. *Le Gaulois*, initially invoking a sentimental attachment between France and what was once “notre plus belle colonie”, recorded the enthusiastic reception of Quebec’s inhabitants for a visit from Washington of Jules Cambon. In highlighting the lost province whose heart had never ceased to beat for its real mother country,

⁸⁸⁷ *Le Gaulois*, 8 November (thoroughness), 20 October & 2 November (pragmatism).

⁸⁸⁸ See for example “Dénouement Inévitable” by A.de Mangay in *Le Gaulois*, 6 November, stating that their position at Fashoda had become hopeless after Kitchener’s entry into Khartoum. On Delcassé’s feelings about the British threat, see Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 102.

⁸⁸⁹ Portugal was cast as another victim- see *Le Gaulois*, 29 October, discussing what the Portuguese made of Britain disposing of its colonies in the Anglo-German accord.

⁸⁹⁰ *Le Petit Journal Illustré*, 20 November 1898. See picture 5.2, also the description at Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 10, and the cartoon itself - Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 82-83.

⁸⁹¹ *La Petite République*, 21 September remarked Egypt as “cette opulente proie que l’indifférence complice de l’Europe avait jeté dans son griffes”. One said the word “Fashoda” in Britain, according to *Matin*, 18 October, to a public as one would “mords à un boule-dogue”, presumably getting the same reaction, despite that public being otherwise ignorant of Sudanese geography.

comparison was made with Fashoda.⁸⁹² The implication was that France should not make the same mistake in Africa. Was it entirely coincidental that *Le Figaro* should publish an editorial reciting the history of Quebec as evidence of French past, and continuing, civilisation, valour, and heroism when outnumbered ten to one by the British, on the day when Marchand's presence at Fashoda was confirmed?⁸⁹³ *Le Figaro's* line, recalling both Dupleix and Montcalm, was taken up by *Le Gaulois* arguing that France now had its eyes open and should not make the mistake of abandoning Marchand given "l'égoïsme et la mauvaise foi qui président à la politique britannique".⁸⁹⁴ A month later, the drama of 1759 still resonated for *Le Gaulois* readers of 1898, inasmuch as it presented similar spectacles of France having its interests far away defended against Britain by an outnumbered and ill-supplied hero figure (Montcalm in 1759, Marchand in 1898), his perseverance undermined by internal divisions weakening metropolitan France, whilst the British concentrate all thought and force on achieving their objectives.⁸⁹⁵ The less sentimental *Le Matin* printed a call for national unity, comparable to that of Britain, from the Duc d'Orléans, pointing to France struggling for apparently worthless bits of snow in 1759 and again for bits of sand in 1898. The lesson in both cases was that France should be not so much worried about the dubious intrinsic value to them of the territory at issue as determined not to create the dangerous precedent of being cowed by threats.⁸⁹⁶ In other words, the substance of giving up Fashoda no longer mattered, but concessions should still if possible be obtained elsewhere. On the conclusion of the crisis, *L'Autorité* trenchantly reminded its readers of the no fewer than 500 years of intimidation from across the Channel, of which Fashoda represented the most recent episode, and looked forward to the day when

⁸⁹² *Le Gaulois*, 23 September.

⁸⁹³ *Le Figaro*, 27 September.

⁸⁹⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 28 & 29 September.

⁸⁹⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 31 October.

⁸⁹⁶ *Le Matin*, 25 October.

Science would enable France to hold London to ransom.⁸⁹⁷ More sorrowful than aggressive, Desmolins' reflections, entitled "Open Wound", reminded *Le Gaulois'* readers of previous Ententes Cordiales (of Louis Phillippe and Napoleon III) and the need to choose between "politique continentale ou coloniale", if finding it difficult to take the hand that had just hit France.⁸⁹⁸

Antagonism was not, therefore, the whole story. Anglo-French history was directed to conciliatory ends, even when the opportunity for engendering enmity presented itself.⁸⁹⁹ On the day of Trafalgar's anniversary, *Le Gaulois* had anticipated in London a day of illuminations and celebrations "avec un éclat tout particulier", in a show of chauvinism fermented over the last 12 months by Fashoda.⁹⁰⁰ Two days later, reports, under the heading "Une Foule Indifférente", reported the gathering "beaucoup moins considérable que l'année dernière, circule absolument silencieuse autour de la colonne et s'éloigne sans manifester le moindre impression". Only hotels near to the column were flying flags, and the column itself had been festooned not by enthusiastic private patriots but a company with a chain of London restaurants, primarily interested in generating some trade on a Friday evening.⁹⁰¹

3. Britain as a Commercial Nation.

The contrast in values (Britain perceived as a country of commerce and pragmatism, relative to French notions of honour) served to explain how Fashoda was unfolding, but again did not necessarily imply hostility towards Britain. According to *Le Gaulois*, where France sent flags, Britain and Germany despatched commercial travellers. Here, it was the French who were open to criticism. Portrayed as an economic victim, a net

⁸⁹⁷ *L'Autorité*, quoted in *Matin*, 9 November.

⁸⁹⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 8 November.

⁸⁹⁹ Anglophobe spirit was distinctly absent from *Le Matin*, 20 October, reports on a Franco-American fete on the anniversary of Yorktown's surrender, held by the Société Lafayette to promote friendship with the U.S.

⁹⁰⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 20 October.

⁹⁰¹ *Le Gaulois*, 22 October, *Le Matin*, 22 October.

importer with depleting gold and silver reserves, France became anaemic in an image that clearly fed into a wider discourse of national decline that encompassed dénatalité, internal political divisions, diplomatic isolation and military weakness since 1870. Having observed that “Notre industrie...Elle est frappée”, the article concluded that the world was being invaded by American goods.⁹⁰² This represented another traditional French/Anglophone contrast, not necessarily of Anglophobe connotations, if nevertheless a cause of concern in France. Even Marchand himself, prior to his expedition, had to apply not to French manufacturers for cloth suitable for barter trading with Africans but those of Manchester and Liverpool able to supply materials specially tailored for African tastes.⁹⁰³

If colonial disputes symbolised French economic inadequacy, France’s colonial rivals might offer a potential counter model. Africa could be a possible solution to European economic and social problems. Unfortunately, France was unprepared for this, to the extent that even the Belgians ran their section of the Congo more efficiently and productively than the French did theirs, because would-be investors were exasperated by “les minuties et les taquineries administratifs” of the French colony.⁹⁰⁴ *Le Matin* partly attributed the problem to structural defects in French colonial administration. Its employees had no personal interest in the prosperity of the areas they governed, all too often there for too short a period of time before recall from Paris. Partly the problem was

⁹⁰² *Le Gaulois*, 12 October. These contemporary concerns about the nineteenth century French economy as a “backward” entity in relation to Britain, the USA or Germany were reflected in the subsequent histories, for a classic exposition of which see David S.Landes, “French Business and the Businessman” in Edward Mead Earl, *Modern France, Problems of the Third and Fourth Republics* (Princeton, Princeton University Press: 1951), 334-353.

⁹⁰³ Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 34. The main purpose of the Manchester Geographical Society, founded in 1885, was the conscious study of the commercial geography of new markets, the Congo being one of its two main areas of interest in the 1890s-D.A.Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry and the World Market 1815-1896* (Oxford, Clarendon Press: 1979), 182-183. A strident morality and an eye for a profitable opportunity combined in *The Times*, 5 October, noting Kitchener’s distaste at the “state of nature” in which he found Marchand’s African contingent, but this was still cast as a future opening for Manchester cotton.

⁹⁰⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 20 September. See also *Le Figaro*, 25 September.

French commercial culture, of small (family) based firms and wealthy individuals reluctant for their wealth to leave France. This was different from Britain, with its long-serving officials having their own commercial interests in their provinces, and to the concentrated capital of the large British colonial companies happy to send talented young men overseas for long stretches to make their fortunes.⁹⁰⁵ One conclusion drawn from this by *Siècle* was that the French should abandon colonial expansion and instead put their efforts into developing the colonies they already possessed.⁹⁰⁶ In remarking “Après avoir vu tout ce qu’on fait les Belges sur leur rive, il est dur de constater que sur le notre il n’y a rien!”, *Le Figaro* suggested that everything had been put into the despatch of military missions outside of the Congo when the priority ought to be development, like building hospitals, of colonies presently owned by France.⁹⁰⁷ These sentiments drew on the Colonialist lobby’s “exploitationist” wing, lacking the ambitions of their “expansionist” colleagues and more naturally inclined to placate Britain.⁹⁰⁸ If there was a suggestion that Britain had spent too much money on armaments not to realise the fruits of this investment by waging war, equally British pragmatism might dictate that a war would not be a commercially viable course of action.⁹⁰⁹ Such was the interpretation of *Le Matin* for British reluctance in 1877 to go to the trouble of avenging a defeat in South Africa, at a time when the value of the South African mines was not yet known.⁹¹⁰

Commerce shifted the emphasis from unbridled, potentially fractious, expansionism towards economic development but also offered another peaceable conclusion, in the

⁹⁰⁵ *Le Matin*, 23 September.

⁹⁰⁶ *Le Siècle*, 6 November. *Le Liberté*, quoted in *The Times*, 7 November, agreed that France should explore and exploit what it already had

⁹⁰⁷ *Le Figaro*, 25 September.

⁹⁰⁸ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 17-19, and Keiger, “Franco-British Relations”, Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 165, clarify these currents of opinion.

⁹⁰⁹ *L’Intransigeant*, 4 November.

⁹¹⁰ *Le Matin*, 4 November.

form of Anglo-French mutual dependence. After the crisis, “Si Nous Avions Eu La Guerre” painted an apocalyptic picture not of death or violence but, without British buyers, economic desolation across textile industries in north and east France, for food producers of Normandy and Brittany, and all producers of champagne, even if Paris might have insistently continued its pleasures.⁹¹¹ In sum, “war with England would have been bankruptcy for large numbers of our manufacturers and merchants, and starvation for many of our peasants”.⁹¹² Even during the crisis, one writer might find it paradoxical that the two countries with which France enjoyed most trade were also those with whom she had “les relations plus pénibles”, and another saw British and German imports aligning to flood Siam, a more imaginative approach drew the readers’ attention to the potential for friendship.⁹¹³ If French exports to Britain were worth over 1,300 million Francs annually, whereas those to Russia were barely 50 million, was there not much to be said for British friendship being just as worthy as that of France’s favoured ally?⁹¹⁴

4. A Question of Honour and Conciliation.

Ideas of national “honour” punctuated conservative discourse on French policy. At the start, *Le Gaulois* insisted that, with official backing for Marchand and the tricolour flying at Fashoda, the stand off could not but be a matter of honour on Paris’ side, with the public assured that French national honour would remain intact in Delcassé’s hands during negotiations.⁹¹⁵ “Honour” could most obviously be invoked to justify nostalgic notions of an idealised past in which foreign policy was run by (implicitly aristocratic) men disinterested in anything as sordid as commerce - an interesting counterpoint to *Le*

⁹¹¹ *Le Gaulois*, 6 November.

⁹¹² *Times*, 7 November, quoting *Le Gaulois*.

⁹¹³ *Le Matin*, editorial 18 October, *Le Gaulois*, editorial 18 October.

⁹¹⁴ *Le Matin*, 17 October.

⁹¹⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 11, 13 & 24 October. It was ironic that, when it became politic to soften up public opinion by airing the idea of withdrawing Marchand, this too was framed in terms of keeping, or even promoting, honour- *Le Matin*, 10 October & quoting *Le Figaro* on 2 November. *Le Gaulois*, 7 November, also vindicated government policy for showing a reserve and wisdom that had been lacking in 1870.

Matin's analysis of the reasons why French colonies, in contrast to Britain's, lay undeveloped.⁹¹⁶

However, more often until the end of the crisis the concept of honour served to unify and stress underlying shared values of Britain and France. Following the earlier battle at Atbara, *Le Temps*, having praised the manner of Kitchener's victory, had joined "en toute sincérité avec l'ensemble du monde civilisé" to rejoice in his success.⁹¹⁷ The implicitly Christian basis of French support manifested itself in the further description of Omdurman: "C'était une scène du temps des croisades".⁹¹⁸ These sentiments were accompanied by much praise for Kitchener's skills.⁹¹⁹ Reports of the Mahdists stressed that "la bravoure de ces barbares était incroyable" but, in the end, barbarians were all they were.⁹²⁰ Concepts of "international law", taken to presume the idea of Kitchener not fighting Marchand, impliedly did not apply to the Mahdi, or any native African powers.⁹²¹ Notions of honour and courtesy shown by Marchand and Kitchener were cast against the savage nature of the Mahdist regime on whose defeat both countries' aspirations depended. In the hostile environment of the Sudan, Marchand would, it was speculated in advance of confirmation of his presence, behave as befits one European to another in a territory where they had just overcome barbarism.⁹²² Their two countries were in the "avant-garde du monde civilisé".⁹²³

⁹¹⁶ *Le Gaulois*, 4 November.

⁹¹⁷ *Le Temps*, 12 April, quoted in Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed) *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 168. On the battle, see Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 108.

⁹¹⁸ *Le Temps*, 7 September.

⁹¹⁹ *Le Temps*, 5 & 7 September, cited by Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 170 & *Le Gaulois*, 6 September.

⁹²⁰ *Le Matin*, 5 September.

⁹²¹ *Le Gaulois*, 19 September.

⁹²² *Le Journal des Débats*, 20 September.

⁹²³ *Le Journal des Débats*, 20 September & *Le Temps*, 16 September; After Omdurman, the British freed German, Italian, Greek and Jewish captives alike from the Mahdi's prisons.

Notions of honour and courtesy continued to infuse reports on the men at Fashoda, whereas in reality the initial encounter between Kitchener and Marchand, according to some eye witness reports, was animated by anger and gesticulations.⁹²⁴ The “haute courtoisie” of both governments was reflected in repeated praise for the gentlemanly way in which Kitchener met French expectations that the Marchand expedition would be dealt with politely.⁹²⁵ On the basis of Kitchener’s despatch and Baratier’s reports, the French press did not stint in their praise for the courteous and restrained way in which both sides conducted themselves during the stand off.⁹²⁶ Marchand and Kitchener having exhibited bravery and chivalry, “Kitchener est homme de parole”.⁹²⁷ The press had also not forgotten that Kitchener had as a young officer fought for the French in 1870 and carried an account of his fervent enthusiasm at the time to serve France.⁹²⁸ This did not mean that there was a complete conciliation of British and French interests. News of the trade off between the rival forces of fresh vegetables for champagne undermined elements of Kitchener’s despatch by demonstrating that Marchand was more than adequately supplied, and able to remain at Fashoda without sustenance from Anglo-Egyptian quartermasters.⁹²⁹ That Marchand’s expedition had planted and grown fresh vegetables showed their initiative and, more subliminally, the capacity of the land around Fashoda for fertility and the process of being rendered distinctly French.⁹³⁰

⁹²⁴ For which see General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, *Memories of Forty-Eight Years of Service* (London, John Murray: 1925), 126, Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 177 and Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 132.

⁹²⁵ *Le Figaro*, 5 October and *Le Gaulois*, 19 September. Kitchener’s orders not to resort to violence, and Marchand’s refusal to move, having left the French expedition for several weeks facing an Anglo-Egyptian detachment encamped beside Fashoda, the governments deliberated-while Baratier, travelling via the Nile to Paris and back, and Marchand on much the same route as far as Cairo, were reported as having been treated well by British officers accompanying them- *Le Gaulois*, 27 October & 4 November, *Le Matin*, 12, 22 & 27 October.

⁹²⁶ E.g. *Le Figaro*, 5 October, *Le Gaulois*, 28 October & 5 November.

⁹²⁷ *Matin*, 8 November, *Temps*, 23 September.

⁹²⁸ *Matin*, 5 October; Bates, *Fashoda Incident*, (1984), 131.

⁹²⁹ *Gaulois*, 28 October, reporting that wine had been traded for fresh vegetables directly before Baratier’s departure for France, *Matin*, 22 October, adding cigars and champagne to the list of bartered items, and *Figaro*, 6 October, relaying news of gifts of champagne from Marchand.

⁹³⁰ Fruit trees and vegetables, including haricots verts, were planted very shortly after arrival on 10 July 1898, as well as peas, and cabbages. Bates, *Fashoda Incident*, (1984), 114-115 & 134.

The divide between *Le Matin*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Gaulois* on one hand, and *La Petite République* on the other, was most emphatic in the question of values, but an attitude of conciliation was by no means the monopoly of Socialist or Pacifist rhetoric. *Le Temps* opined at the start of the crisis that:

Il est un point qui est un quelque sorte un article de foi et c'est qu'une rupture entre les deux grand puissances libérales de l'occident serait un désastre irréparable pour la masse de l'humanité et du progrès.⁹³¹

Four days later, *Temps* averred, in terms even more reminiscent of *La Petite République*, that it would be “un crime contre la civilisation et qui violeraient leurs meilleures traditions si elles laisseront rompre de gâité de coeur la solidarité nécessaire entre les deux grandes puissances libérales de l'occident”.⁹³² *Le Figaro* hoped that an appeal to the spirit of equity animating the British government would mean sensible negotiations.⁹³³

When the French did claim for themselves a role in the forefront of civilisation, citing help for blacks against slave traders, this was neither a distinctively French aim nor was it implicitly directed against Britain.⁹³⁴ Depictions of Marchand as an emissary of civilisation were not necessarily pointedly anti-British, with Delcassé's protest, that all his mission had done was take Fashoda from Barbarism, as an adjunct for a proposed entente in Africa.⁹³⁵ The commonality of French and British values and interests therefore remained a recurrent theme on the right.

⁹³¹ *Le Temps*, 23 September.

⁹³² *Le Temps*, 27 September.

⁹³³ *Le Figaro*, 12 November.

⁹³⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 20 September.

⁹³⁵ *Le Matin*, 17, 24 & 25 October. Ranging from the localised “relations plus amicales” between French officers at Kissi and Saki and their British peers who arrived at these places, to an “entente formale et définitive” to cover all African possessions, the idea of closer links recurred throughout the crisis- *Le Matin*, 9 September, 9, 14 & 26 October.

Placing values of civilisation in opposition to those of military strength, *Le Matin* even argued that Britain's industrial supremacy, and moral and intellectual superiority, "sont en raison directe de son inaptitude militaire". This was evidenced by its inferiority in "hommes de guerre" and, in common with France, the lack of importance attached to the military or to men from the army since the time of Napoleon and Wellington.⁹³⁶ This view, however, was less representative than the abundant commentary on Britain's naval strength relative to that of France. The press was well aware of, and commented on, the disparity in naval strengths between the two nations.⁹³⁷ Whatever the shared values, ultimately many French journalists would have agreed with the political scientists who later classified Britain as the "bully" of Fashoda.⁹³⁸

5. Dissecting British Society.

Each paper varied in how it assessed the (potential) conflict between different sections of "les Anglais", according to its own pre-conceived political stance. *La Petite République* naturally inclined to interpret the crisis explicitly in class terms, as a struggle not of one nation against another but between small elites in both countries; "Le conflit n'est pas entre deux peuples, mais entre deux minorités capitalistes".⁹³⁹ A far commoner approach was to fasten upon the distinctions between the British government, the British press, and the British people/public opinion. In adopting the view that, at any given juncture, one faction (or elements thereof) might be more amenable to making concessions than others, the French press challenged the impression of the single, monolithic "Angleterre" upon which they themselves had implicitly expounded elsewhere.

⁹³⁶ *Le Matin*, 17 October. Presumably the writer had forgotten Boulanger.

⁹³⁷ *Le Matin*, 20, 25 October, 3 & (quoting from *La Libre Parole*) 9 November.

⁹³⁸ Russell J. Leng & Stephen G. Walker, "Comparing Two Studies Of Crisis Bargaining: Confrontation, Coercion and Reciprocity" in *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 26.4 (December 1982), 583, interpreting Britain during Fashoda playing "Bully" in 1898. Delcassé also admitted the decisive role of British naval strength.

⁹³⁹ *La Petite République*, 21 September.

Le Gaulois initially placed its faith in an interaction between two sensible governments wanting to preserve relations “de haute courtoisie”, ready to study calmly the complex questions raised by the meeting of Kitchener and Marchand at Fashoda.⁹⁴⁰ The contrast was drawn between the equitable British cabinet, as courteous as Kitchener himself, and the precipitate, inflexible views of the British press to which it was not listening.⁹⁴¹ As the crisis wore on without resolution, the tone of reassurance remained in the columns of *Gaulois*, quoting an anonymous diplomat stating that it was the intention of neither government to make things worse, or arguing that neither the tone of the press nor that of certain “hommes d’état d’outre manche” meant that the government would push things to the extreme of threatening French honour.⁹⁴² This was tempered by criticism of the “discours imprudents” by several British politicians.⁹⁴³ In *Le Matin*, it was argued that Lord Salisbury was no longer in full control of British policy on Fashoda, having lost power to the press.⁹⁴⁴ Even the end of the crisis found ambiguous reactions towards the attitude of the British government. Where *Le Gaulois* remarked on the measured and courteous tones of Salisbury’s speech at the Guildhall, *Le Temps*, looking forward to further talks, considered him a “généreux vainqueur” pushed to the line he had currently taken by his own cabinet.⁹⁴⁵ Conversely, *Le Figaro* deplored Salisbury carving up dieing empires with the USA and accused the cabinet of being infused with the spirit of Bismarck, if also hoping to appeal to a spirit of equity within the British government.⁹⁴⁶

British “Public Opinion” was at first equated with the press, led by and synonymous with the “grands organes de l’opinion publique anglaise”.⁹⁴⁷ *Le Gaulois*, in keeping with

⁹⁴⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 19 September.

⁹⁴¹ *Le Matin*, 5 October, *Le Figaro*, 29 September & 7 October.

⁹⁴² *Le Gaulois*, 12 & 30 October.

⁹⁴³ *Le Gaulois*, 23 October.

⁹⁴⁴ *Le Matin*, 23 October.

⁹⁴⁵ *Le Gaulois* & *Le Temps*, 6 November.

⁹⁴⁶ *Le Figaro*, 12 November.

⁹⁴⁷ *Le Temps*, 23 September.

its class sympathies, maintained throughout a simple cause-and-effect relationship between the papers being “suréxcités” and thus too the public, then the press later on calming the public.⁹⁴⁸ It clearly felt disregard for both British public opinion and extreme chauvinists, declaring that neither decided British government policy.⁹⁴⁹ Similarly, *Le Figaro* held that the British public “perdit son équilibre” under the encouragement of press and some politicians.⁹⁵⁰ Examining the crisis with longer hindsight in December, Villars went further in commenting “J’ai souvent dit qu’il n’y avait pas de peuple plus copieusement et plus mal renseigné comme le peuple anglais”. However, there was the hope that in future British people might demand “un plus d’exactitude et de franchise” from the press and the men of state who had deceived them, nearly launching them into a war against a people with whom they had no cause to quarrel.⁹⁵¹

Le Matin was more sophisticated, making some attempt to distinguish between public opinion and that of the press, if contradictory as to the direction of popular sentiment. It accepted that the press of both nations had a role to play in calming public opinion and therefore facilitating a friendly resolution and was, too, not above labelling the Anglo-French press as “organs of public opinion”.⁹⁵² Nevertheless, the British populace was not always taken as merely the passive recipient of press or politicians’ messages: Depicted one day as provoked to the most visceral anger by mere mention of the word “Fashoda”, the next they were claimed to be mostly peaceful, desiring only a satisfactory end to the crisis without humiliation for anyone.⁹⁵³ Influenced by “mensonges et provocations” as bad as anywhere else, “la foule en Angleterre”

⁹⁴⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 21 October & 9 November.

⁹⁴⁹ *Le Gaulois*, 4 November.

⁹⁵⁰ *Le Figaro*, 5 November.

⁹⁵¹ *Le Figaro*, 12 December.

⁹⁵² *Le Matin*, 11 October, 1 November.

⁹⁵³ *Le Matin*, 18 & 19 October.

presented dangers but was portrayed as perfectly capable of resisting appeals to its less generous sentiments by chauvinists and politicians in search of popularity.⁹⁵⁴ To the end of the crisis, *Le Matin* balanced the need to show Britain's resolve, by way of fears of national pride making its way into diplomacy, or the effervescence of public opinion bearing on Salisbury, with a desire to play down the threat of war, claiming British people were openly anxious about it, desirous of peace, and unnerved by war preparations.⁹⁵⁵ Despite some condescension towards the British public, whose opinions it sought to explain to a French public whose "sagesse et volonté" would in light of that explanation allow it to sustain the actions of the French government, *Le Matin* recognised the British people as an active entity in its own right, distinct from press or politicians, and tending towards conciliation.⁹⁵⁶

The most frequent and hearty castigations were directed at the British press, deemed an autonomous power in its own right. Before the Fashoda crisis had properly begun, *Le Matin*, not content with just passing on reports from British papers, could complain of the "ton arrogant, comminatoire, passionné avec lequel les organes traitent l'affaire de Fachoda".⁹⁵⁷ *Le Temps* agreed on "la réelle violence" of all British papers, save for *The Manchester Guardian*.⁹⁵⁸ It went on to berate the intransigent, intimidatory and tendentious tone of the press, miscalculating the mood of the French public "qui envisage l'affaire de Fachoda avec calme, mais aussi avec fermeté".⁹⁵⁹ Likewise, *Le Journal des Débats* opposed "la courtoisie française à la rage et la haine qui se manifestent de l'autre côté de la Manche".⁹⁶⁰ *Le Gaulois*, agreeing that the language from London was extraordinarily violent, set the tone of self justification for the French

⁹⁵⁴ *Le Matin*, 19 & 21 October.

⁹⁵⁵ *Le Matin*, 22 & 24 October, 19 October, 2 & 3 November.

⁹⁵⁶ *Le Matin*, 22 October.

⁹⁵⁷ *Le Matin*, 11, 12, 13 & 14 September.

⁹⁵⁸ *Le Temps*, 14 September.

⁹⁵⁹ *Le Temps* 23, 28, 29 & 30 September.

⁹⁶⁰ *Le Journal des Débats*, 20 September.

press for the next seven weeks by determining not to follow the British press “sur ce terrain scabreux”.⁹⁶¹ If deploring that “la presse anglaise continue sa campagne de menaces et d’intimidation”, *La Petite République* later concurred that “le mieux est de ne pas répondre”, in the interest of calming French opinion.⁹⁶² Monson would have welcomed such stances, deploring “the inevitably bad effect of the language indulged in by certain organs of the British press” and how “press indiscretions” tended “to ignore, as seems to be the case more extensively in England than in France, the legitimate susceptibilities of the ruling classes in either country”.⁹⁶³

Some backlash in Paris was inevitable, but surprisingly restrained. Lagging behind the others, *Le Figaro* remained surprised that the British papers were not too irritated at the end of September, but by 6 October, in condemning the British press as bullish and violent, had joined *Le Matin*’s attacks on the British papers’ inability to see there were two sides to the Fashoda question.⁹⁶⁴ But a week later *Le Matin* evidenced its moderation by a continual quest for a moderating voice across the Channel, balancing news of Rosebury’s “Appel aux patriotes anglais” with that of the spirit of conciliation in which Delcassé had received Monson, then deeming the true patriots those on both sides seeking a peaceful solution.⁹⁶⁵ However, *Le Matin* remained critical of a press perceived as trying to prepare the British people for war, adding on repeated occasions that British papers were mostly intransigent, if still courteous in the case of the *Westminster Gazette*.⁹⁶⁶ *Le Journal des Débats* deemed it imprudent to reproduce excerpts from the British papers, such was their uncompromising and wounding tone. This was not least from a desire not to provoke anger, or risk the appearance of France

⁹⁶¹ *Le Gaulois*, 19 September.

⁹⁶² *La Petite République*, 12 & 13 October.

⁹⁶³ NA, FO 27/3397, 533, Monson to Salisbury, 21 October.

⁹⁶⁴ *Le Figaro*, 27 September & 6 October, *Le Matin*, 6 October.

⁹⁶⁵ *Le Matin*, 13 & 14 October.

⁹⁶⁶ *Le Matin*, 18, 21 & 23 October.

as an aggressor in Britain.⁹⁶⁷ More forthrightly, *Le Gaulois* commented on the hypocrisy of the British press and its uncompromising stance.⁹⁶⁸ The paper was now caught between taking credit on behalf of the French press for its self restraint and reserve in contrast to that of Britain, and indulging in Marchand's success such that "les journeaux français s'indignent, exultent, triomphent".⁹⁶⁹

Towards the end of the Fashoda crisis, the mellowing tone of the British press was acknowledged in *Le Matin*, successively moderating and no longer threatening war, continuing "à devenir un peu plus radouci", more friendly, and finally perhaps the friendliest in years.⁹⁷⁰ Quoting extensively from the London press to agree this modification of tone on 1 November, *Le Gaulois* though argued that the British press had been responsible for the absolute intransigence of the cabinet, a view consistent with *Le Temps*' retrospective claim that the press had managed "envénimer cette querelle".⁹⁷¹

Examining the British as a whole, at a time when *A Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons* was still in people's minds and subject to debate, the press showed little more inclination than Demolins himself to take race seriously as an immovable, intrinsic set of characteristics, or a factor in the crisis.⁹⁷² Discussion of the British was explicitly rooted in essentialist views only occasionally, for example when *Le Gaulois* referred to "l'atavisme du sens pratique inhérent à la race", and the "crânerie qui est une des caractéristiques de la race anglo-saxonne".⁹⁷³ More usually, concepts of race played a role that was surprisingly minor in extent and diffuse in application, often employed

⁹⁶⁷ *Le Journal Des Débats*, 24 October-if accepting *Westminster Gazette* and two others as an exception to the rule.

⁹⁶⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 11 & 14 October.

⁹⁶⁹ *Le Gaulois*, 4 & 12 October.

⁹⁷⁰ *Le Matin*, 29, 30 October, 3 & 9 November.

⁹⁷¹ *Le Gaulois*, 1 & 4 November, *Le Temps*, 9 November.

⁹⁷² For debate on Demolins' hypothesis, see *Le Figaro* editorials, 2 & 16 September.

⁹⁷³ *Le Gaulois*, 2 & 10 November .

rhetorically to push strictly extraneous points, for example on French attitudes towards their black colonial soldiers, in contrast to the sense of detachment allegedly characterising British views on their own.⁹⁷⁴

6. The Conclusion of the Crisis.

Latterly, papers on both sides of the Channel abounded with reports of fleet movements and miscellaneous other military manoeuvres on the part of their would-be adversaries. A febrile atmosphere infused reports on British war preparations and armaments, and the brief report shared by several Paris papers on the arrest in Dover of a suspected French spy.⁹⁷⁵ After the end of the crisis naval manoeuvres continued by the British sparked apprehension in *Le Gaulois*. In one article, they were interpreted as evidence of a pre-meditated plan of aggression, whilst another argued, given the French show of goodwill, that in the event of any war the rest of Europe would side with France.⁹⁷⁶ The blunt verdict of *L'Autorité* was that the French were to leave Fashoda not because they were wrong but because they were weak, hence a call for a new “*élan unanime contre la perfide albion*”.⁹⁷⁷ According to Arié, a perceptible shift took place in the columns of *L'Autorité* and *Le Gaulois*, away from antipathy for Germany towards that for Britain.⁹⁷⁸

Even as the chances of fighting over Fashoda receded, the press could foster fears of hostilities on some other occasion; Monson was perplexed to note that the argument was pursued further, to the line that his country was seen to be “desirous of forcing on a quarrel... in order to profit by the existing superiority of naval strength and annihilate the French power at sea”.⁹⁷⁹ *L'Intransigeant* suspected that, having failed to pick a

⁹⁷⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 6 October, limiting itself to the praise for the French black troops. *Le Matin*, 6 & 8 October.

⁹⁷⁵ *Le Matin*, *Le Gaulois* and *Le Figaro*, 3 November, *Le Temps*, 4 November.

⁹⁷⁶ *Le Gaulois*, 8 November.

⁹⁷⁷ *L'Autorité*, 8 & 9 November.

⁹⁷⁸ Arié, “L’Opinion Publique” *Revue d’Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 362.

⁹⁷⁹ NA, FO 27/3397.346, Monson to Salisbury, 18 November.

quarrel over Fashoda, Britain would find another pretext for war.⁹⁸⁰ Fashoda was interpreted even outside of the most stridently nationalist papers on occasion not so much as a potential cause of war but rather the pretext for which Britain had been searching to wage a preventive war. *Le Figaro* speculated that the Royal Navy would have benefited from destroying the French navy in 1898 to the extent of guaranteeing itself at least another 25 years of omnipotence.⁹⁸¹ To even less enthusiasm from Monson, there was also speculation as to how, despite the strength of British numbers at sea, “le Péril Anglais” could not only be thwarted by adequate coastal fortifications but be brought down by a “Guerre de Course” directed at its maritime commerce, with a view to forcing metropolitan Britain into starvation.⁹⁸² The highest levels of anger were directed at Britain not during the crisis, even towards its climax from 27 October-3 November, but after its end, when the real danger of war had receded.

For all that they could no longer have direct impact on the now concluded crisis, these reflections were not unchallenged. Re-interpreting British naval manoeuvres, *Le Matin* sought to calm French fears by casting them as a harmless sop by the British government to their own public opinion, and an exercise to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of their mobilisation procedures.⁹⁸³ *Le Gaulois* contradicted its own apprehensions and counselled against reciprocating British manoeuvres and armaments, adding that they were probably exaggerated.⁹⁸⁴ Papers on the left remained muted in tone. During the crisis, Clemenceau in *L'Aurore* had argued that France would not fight for African marshes whilst Strasbourg and Metz remained in German hands, a line

⁹⁸⁰ *L'Intransigeant*, 4 November.

⁹⁸¹ *Le Figaro*, 5 November.

⁹⁸² *Le Figaro*, 21 November and *Le Journal Des Débats*, 1 December.

⁹⁸³ *Le Matin*, 8 November.

⁹⁸⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 8 & 9 November.

implicitly endorsed in *Le Rappel*'s later criticism of the Germanophilia displayed by Anglophobes.⁹⁸⁵

Britain was not the only, or principal, target of frustration. French internal disunity was a common theme. The British model was there to be followed. Where the French happily criticised their own nation to foreigners, a Briton would choose to ignore "les faiblesses de sa nation, il dira ou proclamera toujours que tout est parfait et supérieur en Angleterre...Il jettera sur sa patrie, devant l'étranger, un riche manteau de poupre et d'hermine".⁹⁸⁶ Henri d'Orléans contended that, in the face of a weighty foreign question, France should be unified like the British, with no Conservatives, Radicals, Opportunists or Socialists but only Frenchmen.⁹⁸⁷ Further, even the free publication by the French press of details on French preparations for war were contrasted by that press to the silence preserved by the usually much criticised British press on British naval/military moves. Consequently, Britain ceased to be constructed as an enemy so much as an example of national discipline and unanimity that the French would do well to imitate.⁹⁸⁸

Self-castigation engendered by Fashoda extended to the incompetence of French politicians in having launched the expedition without international support, and the nature of the Third Republic itself. *Le Radical* made the obvious correlation between weakness during the crisis and the unseating of the French government for up to 10 days, leaving no one with full authority to talk or negotiate.⁹⁸⁹ Impending humiliation at Fashoda was interpreted by *Le Matin* as France's just reward for not having adhered to

⁹⁸⁵ *L'Aurore*, 25 October & *Le Rappel*, 7 November.

⁹⁸⁶ *Le Matin*, 8 September.

⁹⁸⁷ *Le Matin*, 25 October.

⁹⁸⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 19 October, also priding itself on 7 November for being part of "une opposition patriote" that did not agitate the public.

⁹⁸⁹ *Le Radical*, quoted in *Le Matin*, 7 November.

potential anti-British coalitions over past years.⁹⁹⁰ At the time of withdrawal, it lost no time in attaching blame to the structure of French government, specifically “un des jolis mensonges conventionnels de notre méthode gouvernemental” which left the present Foreign Minister to explain what must, to him, have been the inexplicable policies of his predecessor. In what may well have been a Delcassé inspired piece, particular criticism was directed at Hanotaux for having failed to range Europe on France’s side or to secure German support prior to the expedition, whereas mention of Delcassé’s own pre-June 1898 role in approving Marchand’s mission was studiously omitted.⁹⁹¹ The tone differed, in *Le Gaulois*’ generalised attacks on France’s bumptious, incompetent and flighty men of state, together with calls for greater future accountability for their past failures and use of public funds.⁹⁹² This line was hardly abated in later criticism of the stinginess and smallness of a foreign policy below the dignity of a great country, and an extensive attack on the mission as a foreseeable disaster with the men who ought to have realised this still in power.⁹⁹³

The press had been broadly supportive of Delcassé’s hints of assistance from other European countries in seeking a re-opening of the Egypt question, or else concession from London in return for withdrawal.⁹⁹⁴ The visits to France of Witte and General Kourapatkin demonstrated the continued vitality of the Dual Alliance.⁹⁹⁵ Latterly, *Le Matin* resigned itself to the lack of foundations to the rumours that Russia would involve

⁹⁹⁰ *Le Matin*, 21 October.

⁹⁹¹ *Le Matin*, 3 & 6 November.

⁹⁹² *Le Gaulois*, 4 November.

⁹⁹³ *Le Gaulois*, 6 & 8 November.

⁹⁹⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 12 & 13 October asserted that Russia was entitled to involve itself in Egypt, was with France, and gave a most favourable interpretation to the Kaiser not calling on Egypt in his Mediterranean travels, on 23 October publishing Russian press (reacting to the Hicks-Beach speech), support of the Dual Alliance as an instrument against Britain as much as the Triple Alliance. *Le Matin*, 15 October, claimed a highly placed but anonymous German source affirming official German neutrality, but avowing worry for German colonies given the exorbitant British demands, hence common interests with France against Britain. Short quotations from German and Italian newspapers, sympathetic to France/opposed to Britain, were published in *Le Matin*, 28 October, 6 November, *Le Gaulois* and *Le Temps*, 7 November.

⁹⁹⁵ *Le Matin*, 16 October.

itself in anything but an advisory role.⁹⁹⁶ It tried to salvage from the Russian press signs of modest recognition of Delcassé's wisdom.⁹⁹⁷ However, *Le Gaulois* moved the focus to Dupuy's clarity and firmness, whilst *Le Figaro*, claiming Russian awareness of the common threat to French and Russian interests posed by British aims, endorsed Russian policy in preference to French inasmuch as Russia had, not unwisely, urged moderation, not bellicosity, on Paris.⁹⁹⁸ On the left, the Fashoda incident became a vehicle for criticism of Russia, taken to have let France down. Anti-Russian lines, always most natural to the Socialists, had been consistent throughout the crisis. Jaurès had long been unhappy at "Le Rôle Subalterne" played by France to an autocratic power that, committed to expansion in Asia, needed stability on its western frontier and thus German benevolence.⁹⁹⁹ Then there was the disarmament conference about which France had not been consulted in advance, the suspicion being that the peace sought by Russia had no humanitarian motives but rather was a ploy to allow time for completion of the trans Siberian railway.¹⁰⁰⁰ Withdrawal from Fashoda prompted the reflection that alliance with Russia had hypnotised successive governments, whereas in reality French isolation was being perpetuated.¹⁰⁰¹ Provincial Republican opinion resented Russia as "la grande muette", who "nous envoie de très loin ses bénédictions".¹⁰⁰²

Conclusion.

Examination of Paris newspapers *Le Gaulois*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Matin* and *La Petite République*, during the months of the Fashoda crisis yields many different ideas about the British. British characteristics might imply an opposition to French perceptions of

⁹⁹⁶ *Le Matin*, 2 November.

⁹⁹⁷ *Le Petit Parisien*, quoted by *Matin*, 3 November, and *Matin*, 7 November.

⁹⁹⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 7 November & *Figaro*, 12 November.

⁹⁹⁹ *La Petite République*, 18 September, cf. Horne, *Friend or Foe* (2005), 275, citing Jaurès' bitter, continuous, opposition to "France's pact with a reactionary, feudal and unstable Russia".

¹⁰⁰⁰ *La Petite République*, 10 October.

¹⁰⁰¹ *La Petite République*, 9 November.

¹⁰⁰² *Le Lyon Républicain*, 24 October, and *La Semaphore de Marseilles*, 6 November, quoted in Arié, "L'Opinion Publique" *Revue d'Histoire*, Tome XLI (1954), 357.

themselves, but could equally suggest a fundamental identification of French values with British. Many perceptions clearly contradicted each other, for example as to Britons being bloodthirsty and warlike on the one hand, or reserved, cold, courteous, and civilised to the extent of being unmilitary on the other. Attempts were made to distinguish between the attitudes of different elements within British society. It can only follow that there was no one predominant attitude towards the British in the Paris press. Currents rose and ebbed within the period, partly related to the nature of whatever particular information happened to reach the journalists at any given juncture. So, for anxiety about an Anglo-German alliance to be newsworthy, there had to be evidence of speeches or negotiations to fuel speculation. Amidst the differing concerns linked to Fashoda, on the part of these papers and others, it is impossible to discern the widespread, consistent and stridently Anglophobe mood that some past historiography might lead one to expect. Fashoda functioned just as much as a vessel for the airing of other grievances, both domestic and foreign.

Keiger's argument on French press attitudes toward Fashoda made some progress in revising traditional ideas on uncompromising French hostility during the crisis. He contended, firstly, only the "chauvinistic press" were moved by "implacable hostility to British policy in the Nile Region". Secondly this press was not as popular as the remainder, which, thirdly, comprised "more widely circulated dailies" whose views were "characteristic of opinion at large".¹⁰⁰³ Whilst these claims are correct to the extent that they point centrally to an undue past emphasis on the "chauvinistic and Anglophobic elements in French opinion", they are in other ways potentially misleading.¹⁰⁰⁴ Keiger had to concede that *Le Petit Journal*, one of the chauvinistic papers he listed, was not unpopular. Moreover, circulation figures for *Le Gaulois* and

¹⁰⁰³ Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 165 - 166.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 166.

L'Intransigeant, also listed in his “roll call of this chauvinistic press”, were by no means negligible. Certainly, those two were both on a level with two of the three dailies said by Keiger to epitomise the moderate section of opinion, *Le Temps* and *Le Journal des Débats*, and the third of these *Le Matin* was inferior in circulation to *Le Petit Journal*.

Keiger’s conclusions were based on a close analysis largely restricted to *Le Temps*. A reading of *Le Matin* and *Le Gaulois* among others pushes his conclusions further, to suggest that there was no hard and fast distinction between either ideas current in one set of papers as opposed to another, or indeed necessarily the views they expressed about the British. One can only say that if there is an “overall” view that one can take of how Fashoda was reported, contemporary newspapers took the incident as one of less significance compared to other events of the time, notably the Dreyfus case, than has often been maintained. The period when most anger was articulated was not during the crisis itself but directly after Delcassé’s order for withdrawal, by which juncture any press commentary was too late to affect the outcome. Anger over Fashoda extended beyond just Britain to other targets, internal and external. Whether by *Le Matin/ Le Temps*, conservative *Le Figaro/ Le Gaulois* or Socialist *La Petite République*, reporting on the incident tended to display reactions that were more ambiguous and contradictory than merely an unalleviated animosity towards Britain. Notwithstanding what de Gaulle had to say about Fashoda, Tombs’ judgement is that personal relations at points of confrontation such as the crisis were “lacking in bitterness and real hatred”, with more general currents of resentment in some circles on both sides matched by admiration in others.¹⁰⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰⁵ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 424 & 428.

Outside the respective governments and a few limited, nationalistic circles in both countries, perhaps Fashoda had less contemporary significance than was subsequently attributed to it. Lack of parliamentary scrutiny was by no means unusual for foreign affairs in this stage of the Third Republic.¹⁰⁰⁶ It is nevertheless worth noting as odd, for a crisis supposedly so grave, that Fashoda failed at the time to occasion so much as an interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies.¹⁰⁰⁷ This may be less attributable to any insincerity in Delcassé's proclaimed desire to explain himself than to his ability to do so perfectly effectively outside of the Chamber. Through press items, Delcassé was more than capable of exonerating himself, attacking his predecessor Hanotaux, and lampooning as criminal or incompetent the individuals who had authorised Marchand prior to June 1898.¹⁰⁰⁸

Later impressions of Fashoda may have been shaped, and distorted, by the memories aired by De Gaulle after 1940. In the years directly following Fashoda, his biographer wrote, De Gaulle did not join the army because of lasting Anglophobia but rather to escape the Third Republic's atmosphere of chaos and irreligion for a place of "order, structure, a solid mass of certainties".¹⁰⁰⁹ As to others who were to rise to prominence in future decades, in the Belle Époque, "The Dreyfus affair was Blum's political initiation", formed an early influence on Daladier, inspired Herriot to enter politics, and dominated Briand.¹⁰¹⁰ This point was stressed in all four cases by their writings or later

¹⁰⁰⁶ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 37, and Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), 29-30 & 48.

¹⁰⁰⁷ At the end of the crisis, interpellations were considered, combined into one, but ultimately withdrawn, apparently to the universal applause of the Chamber. *Le Matin*, 3, 5, 8 & 9, *Le Gaulois*, 8 & 9, *Le Temps*, 7 November. See also Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 102, Keiger, "Franco-British Relations", Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 166.

¹⁰⁰⁸ For example, *Le Matin*, 3 & 8, *Le Gaulois*, 6 November.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Lacouture, *De Gaulle* (1990), 14.

¹⁰¹⁰ On Blum, see Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 107, *L'Oeuvre De Léon Blum 1891-1905* (Paris, Editions Albin Michel: 1954), William Logue, *Léon Blum the Formative Years 1872-1914* (De Kalb, North Illinois University Press: 1973) and Jean Lacouture, *Léon Blum* (Paris, Seuil: 1977) all of which boasted long passages on Dreyfus, but nothing on Fashoda. Édouard Daladier left no memoirs, but surviving notes indicated Dreyfus as one of the four strong early influences on him – Elisabeth de Réau, *Édouard Daladier* (Fayard: 1993), 17. On Édouard Herriot, see Édouard Herriot, *Jadis Avant La Première*

biographies, only Briand's making mention of Fashoda at all, and then to remark how it was overshadowed by Dreyfus. For every De Gaulle attributing importance to Fashoda, there was a Herriot, Blum, or Briand for whom the overwhelming issue and inspiration of the time was the Dreyfus case, or indeed a Jean Monnet for whom neither Fashoda nor Dreyfus became a passion.¹⁰¹¹ This interpretation would tend to support the contention that for the majority of those who occupied the French political scene when De Gaulle was not pre-eminent, it was matters of internal French divisions that provided their motivation. The issue of the late 1890s that most epitomised those divisions and was closest to French hearts was not Fashoda but the Dreyfus case.

Guerre Mondiale, (Paris, Flammarion: 1948), and Michel Soulié, *La Vie Politique d'Édouard Herriot* (Paris, Armand Colin: 1962), both of which discussed Dreyfus, with no reference to Fashoda. On Aristide Briand, Georges Suarez, *Briand 1862-1904* (Paris, Plon: 1938), 243 & 249.

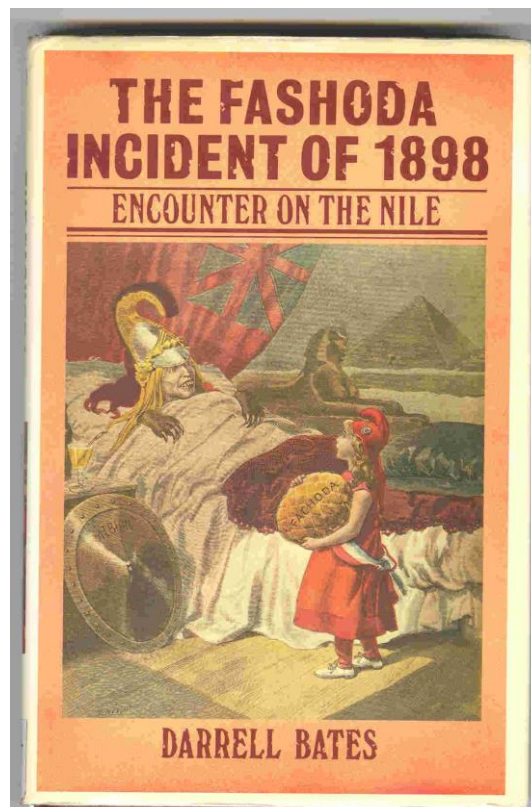
¹⁰¹¹ Jean Monnet, *Memoirs* (London, Collins: 1978), 40 & 43-4, emphasised interest in world affairs at the Monnet family table, with no allusion at all to Fashoda, just an underlying business need "to be on good terms with the Anglo-Saxon world" consistently.

Illustrations (3).

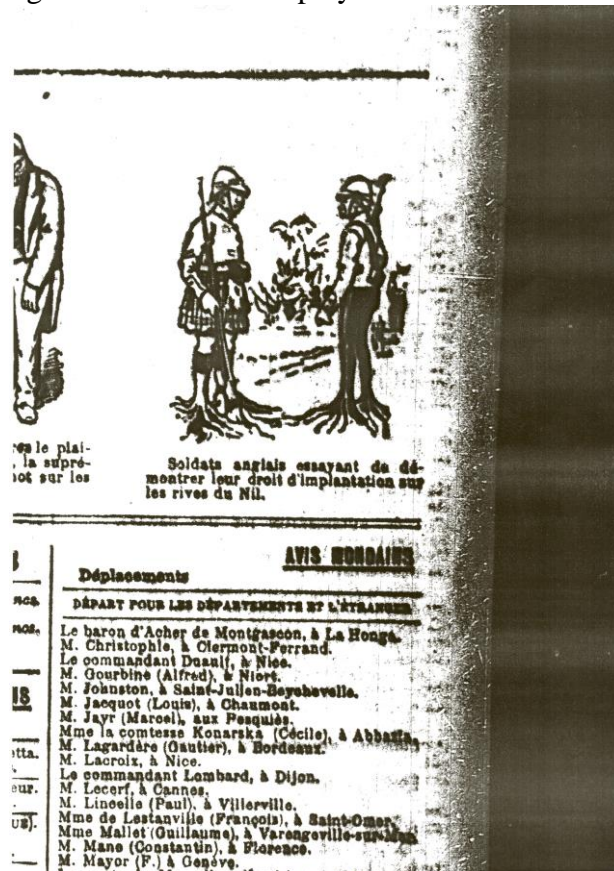
Chapter 5: Picture 5.1 Photograph of Rue de la Mission Marchand, Paris.



Picture 5.2 How Fashoda was later epitomised on the front cover of Bates, *The Fashoda Incident* (1984), employing a cartoon from *Le Petit Journal*, *Supplément Illustré*, 20 November 1898, published safely after the end of the crisis.



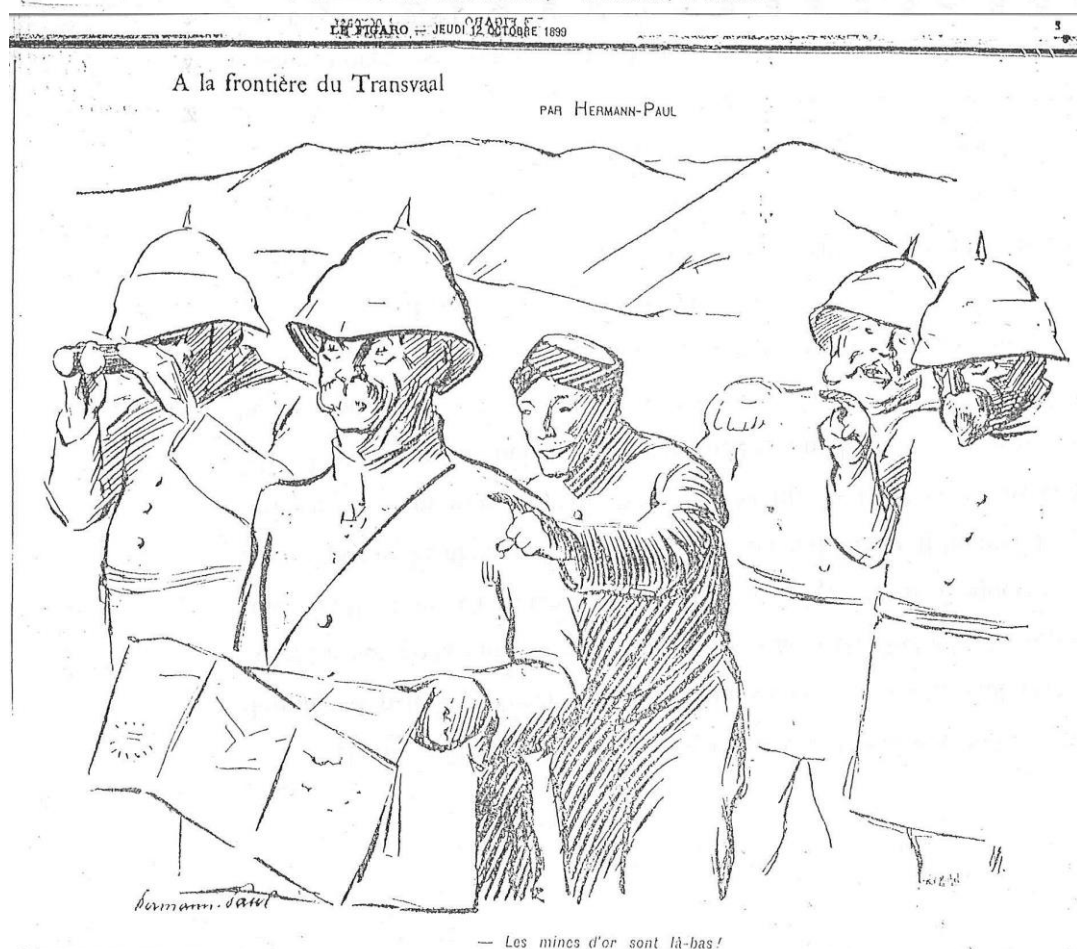
Picture 5.3 From the time of the crisis itself, one of several small cartoons on various subjects from *Le Figaro*, 4 November 1898, squeezed in above some social news, in contrast, merely indulges in harmless wordplay.



Chapter 6: Pictures 6.1 & 6.2 Chamberlain by the piano, leading Queen Victoria in playing the Dum Dum Polka, and as a joker, in *Le Rire*, 14 & 21 October 1899.



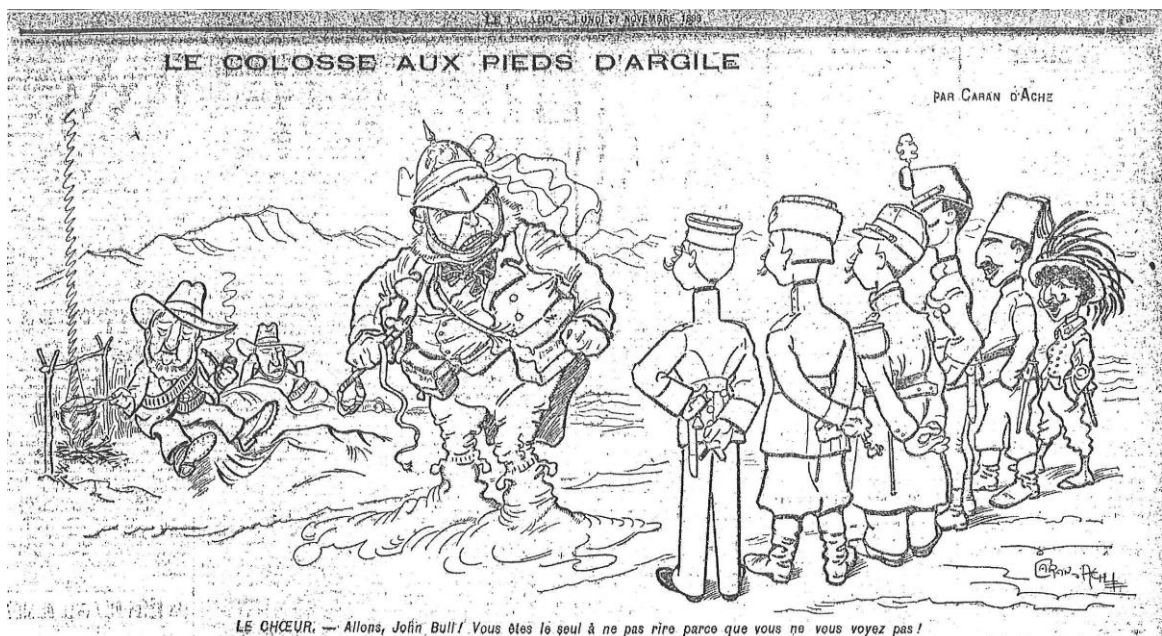
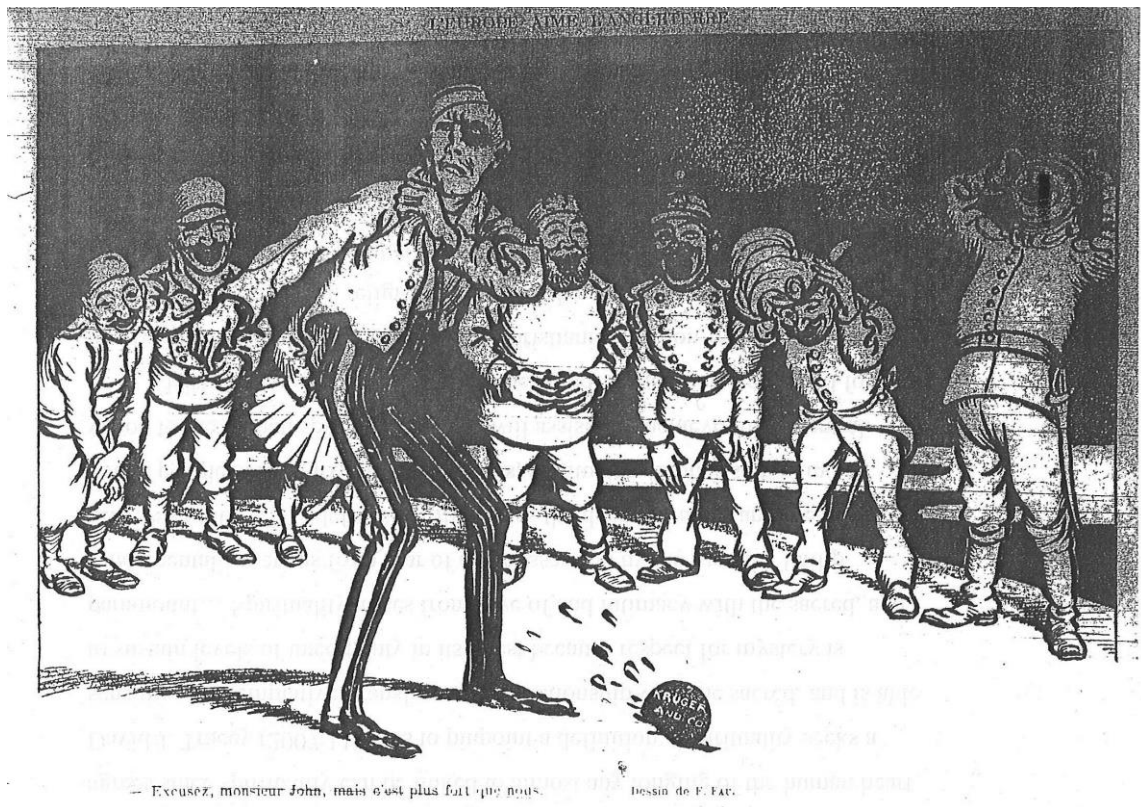
Pictures 6.3 & 6.4 A war of money and gold, *Le Figaro*, 25 September and 12 October 1899.



Picture 6.5 *Le Rire*, 23 September 1899, stung by international criticisms of France inspired by the Dreyfus case, retaliated by lampooning not just British but a wide range of perceived foreign hypocrisy.



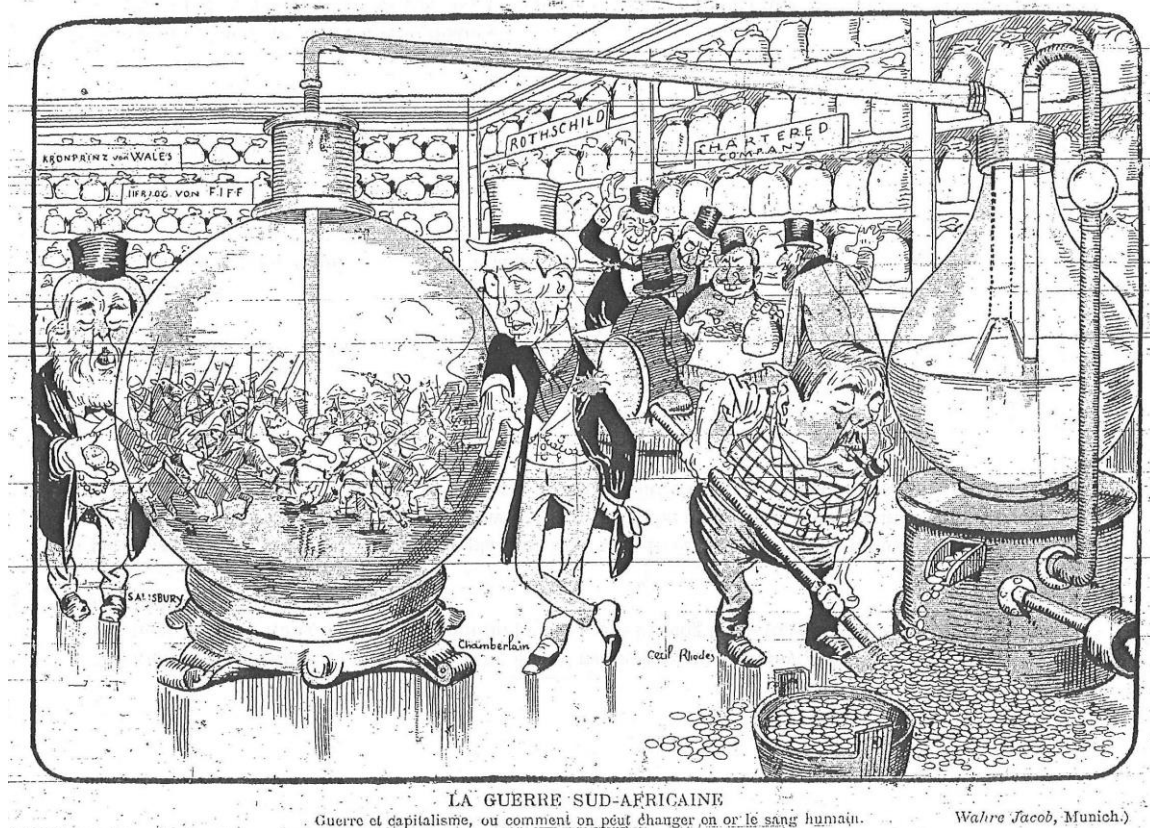
Pictures 6.6 & 6.7 Taking up the theme of international schadenfreude at Britain's initial failures against the Boer forces, *Le Rire*, 11 November 1899, and *Le Figaro*, 14 December 1899, employing the "well-worn metaphor of 'the giant with clay feet'".



Picture 6.8 *Le Matin*, 11 December 1899, Chamberlain as misbehaving child, as other nations look on in mockery or irritation.



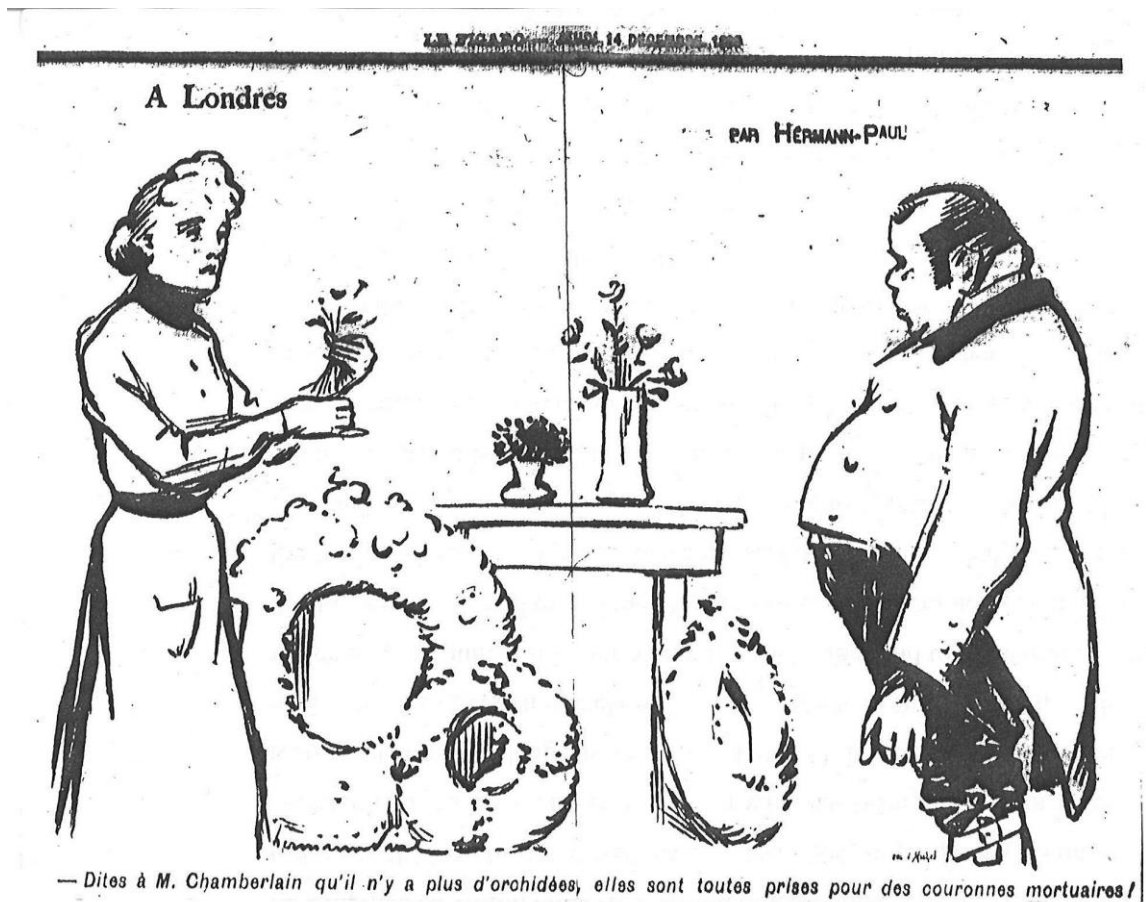
Picture 6.9 *Le Rire*, 23 December 1899 with Salisbury, Chamberlain and Rhodes engaging in a form of alchemy – the creation of gold\coins from blood shed in the war.



Picture 6.10 the more macabre take on the relationship between blood and money taken up by Caran d'Ache of *Le Figaro*, 29 January 1900.



Picture 6.11 *Le Figaro*, 14 December 1899, and the bereaved John Bull, if still taking a swipe at Chamberlain, well known for the orchids that regularly adorned his buttonhole.



Pictures 6.12 & 6.13 German and Austrian cartoons laughing at the British army, reproduced for the French public in *Le Rire*, 2 December 1899.



6: Le Déshonneur de l'Angleterre: The Paris Press and the Start of the Boer War.

Introduction.

Histories centred on the war itself tend to concentrate most heavily upon German responses to the conflict.¹⁰¹² Popular French attitudes towards the Anglo-Boer War have also generally been neglected in histories of France, hence Horne's passing allusion to the Paris of 1903 "still piqued by the imperial humiliation of Fashoda, alienated by the Boer War and instinctively anti-England".¹⁰¹³ When depicted at all, they most often ride on the coat-tails of responses to Fashoda, Robbins, for example, linking the "enthusiastic crowds" who greeted Kruger's 1900 arrival in France to the "bitterly resented" humiliation of 1898.¹⁰¹⁴ According to Bell, the war was interpreted in France as another example of British arrogance and brutality, directed towards a tiny opponent.¹⁰¹⁵ Andrew's chapters on Delcassé's policies in 1899-1902 were an exception, but even these, their emphasis upon diplomacy, admitted that:

Few episodes in the diplomatic history of the early twentieth century have remained so obscure as the schemes for continental intervention in the Boer War. This is especially true of the part played by France.¹⁰¹⁶

Even before the war, one French journalist paused to reflect on the attention being lavished upon how the Anglo-Boer conflict was reported in Germany and Russia, in contrast to the neglected work of his colleagues, asserting "Quant à la France...elle n'existe pas. Personne ne s'inquiète de son opinion".¹⁰¹⁷ Equally, German and Austrian opinions and cartoons were prominent among the material published by French papers

¹⁰¹² G.P.Gooch and Harold Temperley (eds), *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, Vol 1(London, HMSO: 1927), 233-277, reflected this bias. Its chapter "The South African War" contained transcripts of no fewer than 27 documents exchanged between London and Berlin and 11 between Vienna and London, to a mere 8 relating to Paris (7 out of the 8 French documents were dated to 19 January 1900 or before). Corresponding figures for Rome and St Petersburg were 1 and 2.

¹⁰¹³ Horne, *Friend or Foe* (2005), 274.

¹⁰¹⁴ Robbins, *Britain and Europe* (2005), 174-175

¹⁰¹⁵ Bell, *Britain and France* (1994), 10.

¹⁰¹⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 138.

¹⁰¹⁷ *La Libre Parole*, 1 October 1899.

on the war, bringing into question how far there was a distinctively French response to it.

Although Andrew observed that “Anglo French relations have never since been as bad as at the beginning of the Boer War. France was swept by sympathy for the Boer cause”, perusal of the Paris press in the six weeks leading up to the commencement of hostilities on Thursday 12 October 1899 discloses, as in autumn 1898, no shortage of other news or controversies.¹⁰¹⁸ A strike at the Creusot works, intermittent letters from Paul Déroulède in prison following his further plotting in the summer, the siege at Rue Chabrol concluding on 27 September 1899 with the police forcing a surrender from Jules Guérin and his anti Semitic group, and, inevitably, the Dreyfus case culminating in a re-condemnation at Rennes on 9 September, then 10 days later a presidential pardon for Dreyfus, all preoccupied the press. Whilst there was some variation between individual papers in the amount of coverage allocated to the Anglo-Boer conflict, the 6 page *Matin* true to form devoting more space to news of this than, for example the 4 page *Petite République Socialiste*, in all cases in late 1899 that coverage was nevertheless surprisingly significant, and almost daily. The tone was predominantly sympathetic to “les pauvres Boërs”, “cette patriarchale et honnête population des Boërs”, “ce petit vaillant peuple” who were “résolu à vendre chèrement son indépendance”.¹⁰¹⁹ Much the same near unanimity was evidenced in criticism of “la guerre inique et lâche d’un empire de trente-huit millions d’hommes contre un état de trois cent mille âmes”, one “qui serait le déshonneur de l’Angleterre”, initiated thanks to “la criminelle politique” of Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain.¹⁰²⁰

¹⁰¹⁸ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 136.

¹⁰¹⁹ *La Libre Parole*, 25 September, *L’Écho de Paris*, 2 September/*Le Soleil*, 4 October/*L’Autorité*, 4 November, *Gaulois*, 11 September.

¹⁰²⁰ *La Libre Parole*, 1 October, *Le Soleil*, 26 & 28 September & *La Petite République*, 23 September.

The near unanimity of anti-British, pro-Boer declarations in Paris had already registered in August with Edmund Monson, who reported “The tone of the general press is at the moment most hostile to England. The Transvaal question is the theme of constant notice in the Paris newspapers, and its merits are completely transformed and disguised by French journalists”.¹⁰²¹ A month later, in a vein not dissimilar to that of his reaction to French press reports on Fashoda, he stressed that the “unanimous support of the French press is given to the Transvaal”, adding that the journalists:

accuse the suzerain power of bullying, disingenuousness, and unjust conduct. Even journals ordinarily temperate in style and relatively fair in appreciation, such as the *Temps*, the *Journal des Débats*, and the *Matin*, cannot find a word to say in justification of the Imperial government, while the newspapers of less consideration not only teem with abuse, but with expressions of regret at the impossibility of giving the Boers material help.¹⁰²²

In contrast to their approach to the Fashoda crisis, French newspapers therefore tended to converge on much the same destination, but the path which each individual paper took to reach its Pro-Boer/Anti-British stance was determined by its own preoccupations. Consequently, there was considerable variation in the language used and nature of the sympathies expressed.

Why the Attention to the Boer War.

The lack of any substantial, direct, French interests in the Anglo-Boer conflict, unlike in the Fashoda crisis, made it odd that press coverage should have been more voluminous and its tone of criticism more sharp and unanimous in autumn 1899 than it had been a year earlier. There were several reasons for this seeming paradox.

In 1898, the French (notwithstanding Delcassé’s hollow claims to Monson that France would not be unsupported if Britain forced a war over Fashoda) were standing alone. Conversely, a year later, the Paris press could feel emboldened by the world-wide, often

¹⁰²¹ NA, FO 27/3459.382, Monson to Salisbury, 14 August 1899, and *BDW*, 1, 213, Monson to Salisbury, 8 September 1899.

¹⁰²² NA, FO 27/3459.405, Monson to Salisbury, 15 September 1899.

Anglophobic, sympathy evidenced for the Boers, especially in Germany and Russia whose support had not been forthcoming over Fashoda.¹⁰²³ In terms of domestic French politics, sympathy for the Boers was uncontroversial and promised less serious consequences than a stance on Fashoda. In the weeks leading up to the war no one seems seriously to have advocated an official, unilateral, and armed intervention from the French government.¹⁰²⁴ Equally, there was no question of the conflict having been caused by a prior miscalculation on the part of French officials or politicians. The name of Delcassé hardly entered the papers at all.¹⁰²⁵ Almost all shades of opinion on the left and right could therefore happily unite in criticising British policy (albeit in different ways), safe in the knowledge that the conflict did not find France alone nor did its origins potentially raise questions as to French governmental competence.

There was an added moral imperative to write in support of the Boers. The coincidence of the war breaking out right at the end of the century gave some cause for reflection.¹⁰²⁶ In the twelve months since Fashoda, Tsar Nicholas II's efforts for peace and disarmament had yielded an international agreement at The Hague (May-July 1899), making these themes topical. It seemed that Britain, in pressing the Transvaal to war or vassal status was, for all its rhetoric about right and justice, flagrantly disregarding the ideas current at The Hague.¹⁰²⁷ It was widely anticipated that, in breach of The Hague Agreement, Britain would use "Dum-dum" bullets against the Boers.¹⁰²⁸ British success

¹⁰²³ "La guerre des Boers fait s'internationaliser le sentiment Anglophobe". Bunard, "Français-Anglais", interview with Serodes, 1 April 2004, www.europeplusnet.info/article92.

¹⁰²⁴ *Le Soleil*, 13 September, asserted "quel homme de bon sens voudrait que la France allât faire la guerre à l'Angleterre pour le Transvaal?"

¹⁰²⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 16 September, disbelievingly passed on *The Times* reports of Delcassé instructing the French Consul in Pretoria to urge Kruger to concede. *Le Journal des Débats*, labelling it a "nouvelle aussi fantasiste", *Le Matin* & *Le Figaro*, 17 September, carried the same story along with Delcassé's denial of it, and his advocacy of French neutrality.

¹⁰²⁶ E.g. *L'Echo de Paris*, 11 October, urging Loubet to say something to the British, mused "il n'est pas possible que le dix-neuvième siècle s'achève dans un tel abaissement moral".

¹⁰²⁷ E.g. *Le Matin*, 4 October & *Le Figaro*, 30 September & 5 October.

¹⁰²⁸ E.g. *Le Temps*, 12 July, *Le Matin*, 2 September, *La Libre Parole* 25 September & 7 October and *Le Gaulois*, 13 October. "Dum dum" bullets, so called after the factory in India where they were made,

at Omdurman had been hailed as a victory for civilisation. It could even be argued that Kitchener's advance had saved Marchand's small force from destruction at the hands of the Dervishes.¹⁰²⁹ No such excuses were applicable in South Africa. It was not "une guerre civilisatrice" against "de misérables populations soudanaises" because "les Boërs en effet, sont des blancs, comme nous, comme les Anglais. Ils ont colonisé au sens strict du mot le pays où ils sont implantés".¹⁰³⁰

The lack of major French economic or political interests at stake in the Transvaal helped to affirm the moral position of the press of a country which had nothing much directly to gain from a British back down or defeat. Further, espousing the Boer cause underlined the French national self-image of acting as the natural repository for the hopes of the downtrodden everywhere, and served to back a rhetorical call that this universalist role should prompt more action. Reflecting on a cartoon showing France surrounded by her enemies, including English hypocrisy, from the *Dublin Weekly Freeman*, *La Libre Parole* was moved to remark "Nous avons donc quelques amis dans le monde. Ce ne sont pas ni les puissants ni les riches, ce sont les persécutés d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, ceux pour qui nous avons trop peu fait".¹⁰³¹

Thirdly, and in apparent contradiction of France acting as disinterested advocate of Transvaal, elements of the press endeavoured to stress a link of common ancestry between the Boer people and the French. This was reminiscent of the sentimental and

expanded and fragmented on impacting flesh, so greatly worsening the wounds inflicted and increasing the chances of death- Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 251 & 476 and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 41.

¹⁰²⁹ According to Baron de Mandat-Grancey in *Le Gaulois*, 8 November 1898, the Marchand mission, a potential disaster, had only been spared the comprehensive attentions of the Dervishes because, whilst having to confront the British and watch the Belgians, they had had no one left to deal with Marchand.

¹⁰³⁰ *La Petite République*, 23 September.

¹⁰³¹ *La Libre Parole*, 2 October.

racial links with Canada mentioned by *Le Gaulois* in the course of the Fashoda crisis.¹⁰³² Although the Dutch and the Germans could also claim links of kinship with the Boers, others felt “that they were still essentially French”.¹⁰³³ Bolted onto notions of racial kinship was the suggestion in some sections of the press that French values of liberty prevailed in the Boer republics. They were posited as “une nouvelle petite France”.¹⁰³⁴ Across the French press appeared reports of a complete mobilisation of the Boer people, young or old, rich or poor, in terms of a Napoleonic levée en masse in a “fièvre patriotique”.¹⁰³⁵ This alignment was not lost on the British either, Conan Doyle subsequently commenting that “Napoleon and all his veterans have never treated us so roughly as these hard bitten farmers”.¹⁰³⁶

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, commentary on the Anglo-Boer conflict offered opportunity for further reflection on French internal preoccupations. Apparently unrelated to South African affairs, but sharpening French Anglophobia, was British condemnation of the Dreyfus verdict at Rennes. Moves in Britain to boycott the 1900 Exposition resulted not from the French attitude towards the Boer War but rather from disgust at the Dreyfus case. The anti-Dreyfusard press made the greatest linkage between the two issues. There was an element of irony here, inasmuch as the boycott movement, and the sentiment which sustained it, was not restricted to Britain. Sympathy for Dreyfus was shared just as much worldwide (except in Russia and Spain) as sympathy for the Boers (outside of the British Empire and the USA). The rather contradictory result of this was that elements of the French press, whilst hastening to

¹⁰³² *Le Gaulois*, 17, 29 September, 3, 9 & 12 October again led the way here, CF. *Le Matin*, 23 September, *L’Echo de Paris*, 24 September, and *Le Soleil*, 4 October, reporting Boer acceptance of French as brothers.

¹⁰³³ Donal Lowry “‘The Boers Were the Beginning of the End’?: The Wider Impact of the South African War”, in Donal Lowry (ed), *The South African War Reappraised* (Manchester, Manchester University Press: 2000), 208, quoting Villebois-Mareuil.

¹⁰³⁴ *L’Echo de Paris*, 24 September.

¹⁰³⁵ *La Petite République & Le Radical*, 4 & 5 October, see also *Le Figaro*, *Le Gaulois* & *La Libre Parole*, 3 October and *L’Echo de Paris*, 14 October.

¹⁰³⁶ Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Great Boer War* (London, Smith & Elder: 1900), 2-3.

condemn the hypocrisy of all foreign countries (Belgium, the USA, Italy, Germany) critical of Rennes as a means of demonstrating that such foreign opinions were not worth attaching value to, were happy to report pro-Boer protests in and quote from the newspapers of the same countries in order to validate French sympathy for the Boers.

Marchand's Return: A Prelude to the Boer War?

It has been claimed that French press hostility to Britain in 1899 stemmed from humiliation in 1898, which “had given a particular edge to local pro-Boerism”, and indeed that, in resurfacing Anglophobia after Fashoda, “The French took their revenge by openly sympathising with the Boers during the war”.¹⁰³⁷ If those suppositions are correct, one might have expected that the feelings engendered directly after Fashoda would persist throughout mid 1899. It is further evidence of the moderation of much of the Paris press that there is little evidence of this having been the case. Government influence pushed in the same direction. Provisions for the return of the Marchand mission, which, having passed through Abyssinia, left Djibouti on a French cruiser, were handled with extreme care. In view of Déroulède's attempted coup at President Faure's funeral on 23 February, there was a real fear that nationalists would hijack the occasion of Marchand's return for their own political ends. From Marchand's arrival in Toulon on 30 May, through his itinerary on reaching Paris on 1 June, to a final parade of the entire mission at Longchamps on 14 July, no effort was spared in muting any anti-Republican impact of Marchand in metropolitan France.¹⁰³⁸ Marchand was unquestionably popular, attracting huge crowds, but a mixture of his own reluctance to become an Anglophobic figurehead and adroit crowd handling by the authorities ensured that nationalist disorder

¹⁰³⁷ Lowry “Wider Impact”, Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 207, & Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 165 & 163.

¹⁰³⁸ Wright, *Conflict* (1972), 206 & 216, Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 180-1 & 183-5, Smith, *Unknown Frenchman* (2001), 129 and Berny Sèbe, “From Thoissey to the Capital Via Fashoda: Major Marchand, Partisan icon of the Right in Paris”, in Jessica Wardhaugh (ed), *Paris and the Right in the Twentieth Century* (Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars: 2007), 30-34.

was limited to shouting, directed mainly against traitors and Jews.¹⁰³⁹ Nevertheless, in the extensive space given by the press to covering the celebrations occasioned by his return, the absence of Anglophobic undertones was remarkable, in some cases without even any mention of Britain, or any British figure.¹⁰⁴⁰

In the weeks leading up to the Boer War, it might have been tempting to refer back to the events of 1898 and, as Driant did and Demolins would have accepted, interpret both Fashoda and the Boer War as part of a single common British plan to take over Africa. Sudan did crop up in September-October 1899, but in many if not most instances allusions to it comprised short, factual, reports on Kitchener's continued military operations against the Khalifa and his dwindling band of followers, or else adverts for and reflections upon holidays on the Nile.¹⁰⁴¹ It was only on the strident right and left that Fashoda was taken up in the context of the Boer War. Ernest Judet questioned what would happen if Britain had simultaneously to face a Fashoda and trouble from Russia in Asia, therefore lamenting France's disunity but without apparent reflection on any link to the Boers.¹⁰⁴² *La Petite République* contrasted "La criminelle politique de M. Chamberlain" towards Transvaal with the civilising mission in the Sudan, whilst *La Libre Parole*, like Judet relating the crises back to France's internal state, repeatedly cited the courage and defiance of the Boers as an example to Delcassé of what his attitude should have been in November 1898, and to France as a whole.¹⁰⁴³ Such paucity of pieces explicitly linking Fashoda to the Anglo-Boer confrontation would suggest that any chain of causation between the two was either not made, or only implicitly assumed.

¹⁰³⁹ After a few months near Paris spent in quibbling over the mission accounts and delivering occasional lectures whilst kept under close surveillance by the Sûreté Générale, Marchand was sent on a mission to China. By the time of his return, and subsequent attempt to run as MP in the 1906 election, his own vacillations, the changed political landscape, and divisions between the nationalists doomed his efforts to failure- Sèbe, "Major Marchand", Wardhaugh (ed), *Paris and the Right* (2007), 36-41.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Le Figaro*, 2 June & *Le Temps*, 3 June 1899.

¹⁰⁴¹ *L'Echo de Paris*, 28 September, *La Libre Parole*, 27 September & 11 October, *Le Soleil*, 11 October, *Le Matin*, 31 August & 30 September; *Le Matin*, 25 September & *Le Journal des Débats*, 1 September.

¹⁰⁴² *Le Petit Journal*, 2 September.

¹⁰⁴³ *La Petite République*, 23 September and *La Libre Parole*, 16 September & 1 October.

Chamberlain's Work: Outbreak of War, 1 September-14 October 1899.

Whilst there were some parallels between September-October 1899 and September-October 1898, notably the continued prominence of agonising over the Dreyfus case, the outbreak of war in South Africa was constructed in a very different way from the stand-off on the Nile. Across most of the press, journalists deemed the 1899 confrontation as Chamberlain's very personal affair, whereas Fashoda had not been Salisbury's. The ongoing tensions were posed in terms of a duel between the very distinctive and colourful figures of Kruger and Chamberlain, a theme cropping up repeatedly in *Le Matin*, visualising the leaders pointing rifles at one another, and *La Petite République* arguing "c'est l'esprit de rivalité personnelle qui anime le ministre anglais".¹⁰⁴⁴ Imagining the confrontation in these terms opened up the possibility that the pair were as bad as one another: "Cette guerre, Chamberlain la désire, le war office la veut, et M.Kruger, chez lequel la rouerie du patriarche semble avoir fait place à la soif du martyre, fait tout ce qu'il peut pour la hâter".¹⁰⁴⁵

However, there can be no doubt that Chamberlain suffered far more in French newspapers than anyone else. Criticisms piled on almost daily. To take *Le Gaulois* as an example, it attacked "la politique imprudente et inique" of a man of "témérité", a cynical minister of "prétentions exorbitants", and by mid September "il s'agit pour cet ambitieux, hanté par un vision d'un impérialisme sans frein, d'étouffer le mouvement du sympathie qui se dessine... autour du Transvaal".¹⁰⁴⁶ Focus then shifted to his willingness to threaten war.¹⁰⁴⁷ Finally noting "les conditions draconiennes formulées par M Chamberlain, qui sembleraient aux yeux du monde civilisé comme une atteinte par trop flagrante au droit des gens", *Le Gaulois* deemed the Colonial Secretary "le

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Le Matin*, 4 September, *La Petite République*, 31 August.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Le Matin*, 13 September.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Le Gaulois*, 2, 6, 9 & 15 September.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Le Gaulois*, 19 September.

mauvais génie de l'Angleterre".¹⁰⁴⁸ More vituperative was *La Libre Parole*, from the start lampooning the "mélange de mensonges audacieux et de contre-vérités perfides qui font de M.Chamberlain le premier charlatan politique du monde".¹⁰⁴⁹

How meaningful this might be when considering French attitudes towards the British as a whole becomes clearer where the criticisms locate Chamberlain in a wider context. *Le Matin* briefly mooted the idea that, were Chamberlain (and Kruger) simply to be removed from negotiations and replaced by "des hommes d'Etat impartiaux", this alone might suffice to extricate Britain from a confrontation the scale of which Chamberlain did not fully appreciate.¹⁰⁵⁰ It was, however, more common to place the Colonial Secretary into broader stereotypes of British greed and rapaciousness. Sitting squarely within ideas of the British commercial drive, *Le Gaulois* cited the determinant of Chamberlain's policy as the motto "time is money", greed and arrogance subsequently driving the whole cabinet towards war.¹⁰⁵¹ The cynicism "du syndicat Chamberlain-Rhodes-Jameson et cie" apparent in 1896 was still at work but, as the phrasing suggests, Chamberlain was not solely responsible.¹⁰⁵² So what Pakenham identified as "the thin golden thread running through the narrative" was not just seen as a personal issue. The Boers were doomed as soon as "le surprise funestre" of gold under their feet became publicly known, bringing in British individuals keen to exploit it.¹⁰⁵³ Many of "les Anglais convoitent les mines d'or du Transvaal et voudraient se les approprier", and were driven by "la soif d'or" according to M.Pertuisent, consulted by *Le Soleil* as expert on South Africa.¹⁰⁵⁴

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 6 & 1 October, a labelling repeated on 19 December.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *La Libre Parole*, 28 August.

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Le Matin*, 30 September.

¹⁰⁵¹ *Le Gaulois*, 11 September & 4 October.

¹⁰⁵² *Le Soleil*, 11 September and *La Petite République*, 13 October.

¹⁰⁵³ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), xvi & *L'Echo de Paris*, 24 September.

¹⁰⁵⁴ *Le Soleil*, 2 & 4 October.

The idea of the Anglo-Boer conflict as one of money was common across the entire political spectrum, but with differing undertones. *Le Temps*, criticising the determination of “une compagnie de spéculateurs sans scrupules” to grab the Rand’s treasure, and *Le Matin* identifying as motives the desire for gold and commerce, were typical of the moderate conservative press in neither elaborating very much nor attacking Chamberlain personally.¹⁰⁵⁵ In contrast, *La Libre Parole* first railed against “Une guerre douteuse” initiated thanks to the business interests of Chamberlain, Rhodes and the Jews allegedly behind them.¹⁰⁵⁶ This later broadened into the judgment “un Anglais n’a jamais reculé devant un crime profitable... un Anglais n’est jamais arrivé à comprendre qu’une action profitable peut être un crime”, then the reflection “un Anglais équitable, désintéressé, plein de Coeur, est un phénomène rare...un honnête homme entre mille Anglais”.¹⁰⁵⁷ Rather than take up this explicit racial/national typology, satirical cartoons retained at their centre the personal element directed against Chamberlain.¹⁰⁵⁸ In the case of *Le Figaro*, they remained capable of making wider points about the dominance of money in British society, for example echoing *Le Radical* in its claims that Britain fielded “une armée de mercenaires stipendiée par des spéculateurs”.¹⁰⁵⁹

Further to the left, *La Petite République* reinterpreted the idea of the Boer War as a war between races through the lens of its own continuing preoccupation with class. Whereas the Boers “ont colonisé au sens strict du mot le pays où ils s’étaient implantés...les uitlanders... ne sont que des aventuriers venu au pays d’or...les boers vaincus, ce serait le triomphe de la rapacité capitaliste sur le travail honnête et féconde”.¹⁰⁶⁰ The uitlander cause was championed, as pretext for war, by Britain’s acquisitive aristocracy and

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Le Temps*, 30 August and *Le Matin* 10 & 11 October.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *La Libre Parole*, 15 September.

¹⁰⁵⁷ *La Libre Parole*, 1 & 7 October.

¹⁰⁵⁸ See pictures 6.1 & 6.2.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Le Radical*, 14 October & pictures 6.3 & 6.4.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *La Petite République*, 23 September.

bourgeoisie, both profiting from the dangerous and painful working conditions endured by those actually having to dig the gold up.¹⁰⁶¹ The conflict was therefore more than just Chamberlain and Kruger, but rather another manifestation of the trans-national struggle between economic groupings- with money remaining at the centre of the narrative.

Class was also a central theme of Boer War coverage in the columns of *L'Echo de Paris*, but re-framed to meet the political worldview of the right, and once more focussed on the Colonial Secretary. Whilst *Le Gaulois* left implicit any disdain for Chamberlain on the basis of his class, Hector Depasse dwelt repeatedly on the social origins “du cordonnier de Birmingham”, scorning the “ambition démesurée” of the ideas in the head of a “fils d’un cordonnier de la cité de Londres, et lui-même ancien fabricant de vis et d’écrous”.¹⁰⁶² Grandiose ideas originating “dans la tête quelque peu tumultueuse et romantique d’un Disraeli” degenerated in Chamberlain’s hands into “un torrent de vitriol impérialiste assez vaste pour empoisonner tout un peuple”.¹⁰⁶³ Where Demolins had aired a dream of national progress through encouraging limitless individual initiative, *L'Echo de Paris* interpreted Chamberlain as the nightmare of what happens when an ambitious self-made man, his progress facilitated by democracy, displaces those with traditional privilege. Secondly, tying in with the fin-de-siècle ambience was the notion that talking about vassals at all was outmoded and inappropriate for the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁶⁴ Affirming that “L’opinion de l’Europe civilisée s’est prononcée avec éclat contre la prétention gothique et barbare de M Chamberlain à la suzeraineté du Transvaal”, Depasse jibed that this was the first time that Britain had actively sought to export something of the “gothique et suranné” to be found in

¹⁰⁶¹ *La Petite République*, 14 & 25 September.

¹⁰⁶² *L'Echo de Paris*, 4 & 15 September.

¹⁰⁶³ *L'Echo de Paris*, 15 September.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *L'Echo de Paris*, 5 September.

“l’edifice du parlementarisme anglo-saxon”.¹⁰⁶⁵ Unlike Boutmy, therefore, he found little to admire in the old roots of Britain’s constitution. The modernity of a Chamberlain made it all the more incongruous that he had become “ce personnage moyen-âgeux” haranguing the Boers in a “style Gothique” to become “les fidèles vassals de Londres” in a fashion that called to mind the Ottoman Empire.¹⁰⁶⁶ Paradoxically, Chamberlain married modern industrial methods with mores “digne des Attila et de Genséric” in order to get his way.¹⁰⁶⁷

Treatment of others in power was more consistent across the spectrum of the French press. In 1898 the leading political figure on the British side, Lord Salisbury, having escaped relatively lightly in the columns of the French press, in 1899 he and the Queen were seen as potential brakes on British policy.¹⁰⁶⁸ Excepting *Le Temps*, critical as early as mid-July of the “vieux, fatigué, indolent, sceptique” Salisbury and his nephew Balfour who had capitulated to Chamberlain’s “simplisme brutal”, at the start hopes were high that Prime Minister or the Queen would avert war.¹⁰⁶⁹ *La Petite République* anticipated the selfish desire of an old minister who “hésite à clôturer par une guerre sans gloire sa longue carrière politique”, *Siècle* echoing this.¹⁰⁷⁰ On the right, expectations were shaped by personal qualities, “la prudence reconnu et l’esprit de modération de Lord Salisbury” explicitly pitched against Chamberlain.¹⁰⁷¹ True to the value which it attached to social status, *Le Gaulois*, like *Le Figaro*, pinned its hopes for

¹⁰⁶⁵ *L’Echo de Paris*, 24 September.

¹⁰⁶⁶ *L’Echo de Paris*, 5 September.

¹⁰⁶⁷ *L’Echo de Paris*, 5 September.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Praise of the measured and courteous tones of Salisbury’s Guildhall speech (*Le Gaulois*, 6 November 1898), concluding the Fashoda crisis, was certainly not likely to be replicated for the utterances of the Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Le Temps*, 14 July.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *La Petite République*, 23 September, *Le Siècle*, 29 September.

¹⁰⁷¹ *L’Echo de Paris*, 9 & 24 September.

British restraint most forcefully in September on the “haute sagesse” of Lord Salisbury backed by the Queen.¹⁰⁷²

As war loomed, *Le Gaulois*’ hope of a solution via “du caractère et de l’envergure de Lord Salisbury” in arbitration did not disappear.¹⁰⁷³ However, the increasingly dominant current was that “la vieille diplomatie de Lord Salisbury” had succumbed to the new, populist, jingoistic politics of Chamberlain.¹⁰⁷⁴ René d’Aral was convinced by 30 September that Salisbury had been converted to the ways of “son jeune et impétueux collègue”, following the lead of *Le Soleil* which interpreted Salisbury as “un honnête homme” whose hand had been forced by the pushy Chamberlain.¹⁰⁷⁵ The ineffectiveness of forces opposing conflict with the Boers was seen in some quarters as a failure on the part of the checks and balances which, according to Boutmy, were meant to moderate British behaviour. *Le Gaulois*’ acceptance that “la reine règne, et ne gouverne pas”, in “son rôle muet comme de reine constitutionnelle” prompted debate in *Le Matin*.¹⁰⁷⁶ Contradicting claims that the Queen was powerless, Paris’ English colony argued, citing examples of Victoria’s past influence on British foreign policy, that she could stop the conflict, but her inertia was attributable only to a lack of good advisers.¹⁰⁷⁷ Having aired these views, *Le Matin* let the matter rest with their London correspondent’s arguments that the Queen, though commanding deference by virtue of her long personal experience, now as in the days of Palmerston could not rely on her title to prevail against the will of her own government.¹⁰⁷⁸ As to the Prime Minister, *Le Figaro* summed up the move towards war as a victory for “M.Chamberlain, soutenu avec ardeur par le

¹⁰⁷² *Le Gaulois*, 9, 19, 21, 23 & 28 September, *Le Figaro*, 12 September.

¹⁰⁷³ *Le Gaulois*, 12 October.

¹⁰⁷⁴ *Le Figaro*, 22 September.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 30 September.

¹⁰⁷⁶ *Le Gaulois*, 2 & 10 October.

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Le Matin*, 29 & 30 September.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Le Matin*, 2 October.

sentiment public, devant lequel s'est incliné à son tour Lord Salisbury, malgré ses répugnances originelles".¹⁰⁷⁹

There was little attempt to explain how a political system lauded by some ELSP writers could have given such rein to a politician, who drew comparisons with Bismarck.¹⁰⁸⁰ *Le Figaro* produced an assessment of British colonial plans reminiscent of Demolins' introduction, but, beyond this, the story was at least outwardly one of Sciences Po ideas ignored or repudiated.¹⁰⁸¹ *Le Journal des Débats* commented that "les choses étrangères ont un attrait merveilleux pour les Français...pris d'une passion exagérée pour les institutions d'autres pays, les institutions britanniques surtout", as well as "les mœurs anglaises, les habitudes anglaises, l'éducation anglaise", when Britain, in return, regarded "damned" foreigners with suspicion at best and, more commonly, outright disdain.¹⁰⁸² Reporting a tumultuous British anti-war meeting, *Le Matin* denied any fundamental difference between British and French politics, stating "les procédés de discussion dans les réunions publiques sont les mêmes chez nos voisins que chez nous". Divisions based on social class rather than nationality were to the fore, in the sense that *Matin*, scorning the crowd in both countries, concluded "quelle que soit la latitude, l'esprit humain a la même tendance à simplifier les questions".¹⁰⁸³

Fancying that things would be different were "cet honnête grand homme" Gladstone still alive to waken consciences as to what was just, *Le Soleil* interpreted the Anglo-Boer conflict in terms of traditional notions about the British being bloodthirsty, and characterised by "le Pharaïsme élevé à la plus haute puissance".¹⁰⁸⁴ Ideas of duty

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Le Figaro*, 1 October.

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Le Soleil*, 4 September.

¹⁰⁸¹ *Le Figaro*, 7 November.

¹⁰⁸² *Le Journal des Débats*, 3 September.

¹⁰⁸³ *Le Matin*, 26 September.

¹⁰⁸⁴ *Le Soleil*, 4 September & 2 October.

comparable to those in the writings of Bardoux and others, but distorted ones amidst press urgings “de rosser les Boërs”, completed the explanation in early October:

Il faut rendre cette justice aux anglais, ils sont les esclaves du devoir. Malheureusement, ils ont une tendance fâcheuse à confondre leur devoir avec leur intérêt...La difficulté souvent n'est pas de faire son devoir, mais de la connaître.¹⁰⁸⁵

Whilst the press ostensibly contradicted Sciences Po contentions, it did employ their conceptualisations and anticipate points made subsequently by ELSP writers.¹⁰⁸⁶ In its unfavourable comparison of the political system in Britain to that of Transvaal, *Le Matin*, for example, might have been drawing directly on Boutmy's survey of the British constitution in its depiction of “le pays de tradition” locked into the past.¹⁰⁸⁷ Even more explicit, and telling, claiming that Chamberlain controlled the British press *Le Gaulois* pilloried “une anglomanie ignorante” of “les très nombreux Français qui croient en le dogme de l'individualisme anglais, à l'indépendance de jugement qui caractérise chaque sujet de la reine”. The same editorial went on to argue (like Bardoux) that social groupings and common opinions created a society that was in fact conformist, and (like Taine, among others) that the British were uninterested in ideas or theories unless applied in practice, hence “rien en Angleterre ne rappelle la délicieuse anarchie intellectuelle qui afflige notre pays et le rend charmant”.¹⁰⁸⁸

The Boer War as a Focus for French Internal Preoccupations.

The terms in which the press in Paris evaluated both sides in the emerging conflict suggest much about continuing French concerns. On the right, British economic progress was partly explained by the ruthless colonial acquisitions made by companies

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Le Soleil*, 2 October.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Le Matin*, 12 September, made the comparison between Disraeli's unscrupulous imperialism/quest for popularity and those of Chamberlain (“Il méritait de s'appeler Disraeli II”), whilst the blame for French defeat in 1870-1 and the consequent present state of France was partly laid at the door of British non intervention in the Franco-Prussian war by *La Petite République*, 13 September, both points argued later by Bardoux.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Le Matin*, 4 October.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 6 October.

acting on private initiative at the expense of French interests, but on the left economic progress was explicitly linked to political progress, British agricultural advances, compared to France, attributed “à la grande liberté politique” enjoyed for so long in Britain.¹⁰⁸⁹ As at the time of Fashoda, there was some praise for the national unity and sense of purpose presented by British public opinion showing “une résolution froide, bien caractéristique”.¹⁰⁹⁰ Britain also, of course, in implicit contrast to France, remained “une nation essentiellement pratique”, energetic and determined, if now gripped by a new ambitious imperialism “qui gonfle d’orgueil la race la plus orgueilleuse du monde”.

¹⁰⁹¹

Significantly, many of the qualities praised in the Boers were similar to those once identified with the now unpopular British, and implied, similarly, lessons for France. Previous unfavourable *Le Gaulois* commentary on the Boers had characterised Kruger as “le vieillard obstiné” who stood in the way of desirable reforms.¹⁰⁹² Kruger’s laws, enforcing price fixing for dynamite, proved an illogical arrangement with profit from the monopoly passing into commercial hands, whilst Transvaal’s emissary Dr Leyds toured Europe begging a loan for his government.¹⁰⁹³ In autumn 1899, *Le Gaulois* reinterpreted Kruger as a laconic sage “avec beaucoup de modération, de logique et de clarté” in drawing up his ultimata, an epitome of stoicism by way of an anecdote about how, on accidentally shooting himself, he had twice cut off the end of his finger to stop gangrene, and someone who preferred to listen rather than speak: “Quand il parle, c’est

¹⁰⁸⁹ *L’Echo de Paris*, 7 October and *La Petite République*, 5 October.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Le Figaro*, 4 October.

¹⁰⁹¹ *La Libre Parole*, 15 September; *Le Gaulois*, 11 September; *La Libre Parole*, 25 September, *L’Echo de Paris*, 7 October, *Le Figaro*, 8 October; *L’Echo de Paris*, 5 October.

¹⁰⁹² *Le Gaulois*, 2 November 1898. Transvaal’s new proposals to stop the sale of alcohol to the blacks were as likely to be undermined by the badly paid, and thus readily corruptible, Boer police, as the old ones.

¹⁰⁹³ *Le Gaulois*, 6 November 1898. An outrageous violation of economic laws unjustified by any transport difficulties, the monopoly meant dynamite cost 96.50 Francs per case in Transvaal but only 46.50 just across the border in Kimberley.

pour dire beaucoup en peu de mots. C'est concis et plein".¹⁰⁹⁴ As to the civilisation built up by Kruger within half a century, its occupants, in a fashion reminiscent of commentaries on the British, were an antithesis of French disunity and *dénatalité*, living in a rural idyll "attaché au sol et à la vie de famille... les femmes sont fécondes. La moindre famille est composée de dix enfants, tous élevés en vue de travail et de la défense du sol".¹⁰⁹⁵ The rest of the press was less effusive, but in repeatedly stressing Boer piety, determination and, occasionally, welcome of conflict echoed ideas previously aired about Britain, notably in press coverage of Fashoda, and ELSP works.¹⁰⁹⁶

Anti-Semitism.

Given continued French preoccupation with Dreyfus, links could be made between the affair and the Anglo-Boer confrontation, and it is tempting to assume that they were. It was a hallmark of much right-wing press commentary that almost every foreign country was hypocritical in its criticism of Rennes.¹⁰⁹⁷ *Le Journal des Débats* proved the most generous in the case of Britain, placing "l'amour de justice" at the top of the list of seven factors determining British attitudes. Added to this, though, were a hypocritical "goût, particulier à l'Anglais, qui le porte à prêcher et à faire la leçon aux autres", an "ignorance et... mépris des institutions des autres pays...les Anglais sont convaincus qu'il n'y a pas de justice véritable que chez eux", and simple "no popery" prejudice.¹⁰⁹⁸ Reflecting its own attitude of ennui towards the furore generated by the continuing case, *Les Débats* argued that for any country to condemn the affairs of another was futile, but without reference to the Boer conflict: "Ils oublient que pendant quatre-vingt-dix ans, la

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 12 October & 17 September 1899, CF. Boutmy, *Langue anglaise*, (1899), passim.

¹⁰⁹⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 12 October & 17 September.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *L'Echo de Paris* and *Le Matin*, 9 & 10 October, *La Petite République*, 4 & 10 October.

¹⁰⁹⁷ See for example the attacks on Belgium, "pays Dreyfusard", whose ship captains preferred to throw negroes overboard when they fell ill rather than place them in quarantine, or "La Justice Yankee" citing an incident when a Richmond court, faced by a mob outside threatening to lynch an accused if he received only imprisonment, felt compelled to accede to their wishes by passing a death sentence on him, *La Libre Parole*, 3 & 19 September, *Le Soleil*, 18 September. See also picture 6.5.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Le Journal des Débats*, 17 & 13 September: "l'indignation britannique est parti d'un sentiment généreux".

conscience humaine a été révoltée de la façon dont l'Irlande était traitée. Est-ce que l'indignation du monde entier a produit le moindre effet sur eux?"¹⁰⁹⁹

All factions observed London's Sunday 17 September Hyde Park rally, in favour of Dreyfus, with interest. It was mostly Dreyfusards who tended to report a calm protest with no police intervention required.¹¹⁰⁰ Conversely, *Le Matin*'s correspondent remarked on the prominent presence of Whitechapel Jews, and (drawing on ideas of British gluttony as well as tumultuousness) the violence latterly directed at some "honorable Français" by "jeunes énergumènes, dont le moins qu'on peut dire est qu'ils avaient fait honneur à leur déjeuner". "Parmi les défenseurs du droit et de la justice" he concluded, had been someone who had stolen his watch.¹¹⁰¹ *Le Matin* was worried that the London press' "virulentes attaques contre notre honneur et des excommunications définitives à notre adresse" might lead to a boycott of France.¹¹⁰² Nevertheless, the amused tone with which the meeting had been reported was extended to description of British boycott activity, centring on *The Daily Mail*.¹¹⁰³ Such levity was absent from anti-Dreyfusards still trying to tap into stereotypes of disorderly and vociferous Britain to taint their opponents. *L'Echo de Paris* typified them as people who violently dispersed French expatriates gathered in Soho to vindicate Rennes, or the "troupe de ruffians" who had torn to pieces a mannequin representing Mercier in Brick Lane.¹¹⁰⁴ Older stereotypes and concerns also meant that Charles Laurent placed British concerns over Dreyfus in the context of convicts being disposed of at Tyburn and Botany Bay, or Kitchener's men

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Le Journal des Débats*, 15 September. *Le Soleil*, 18 September, in the context of Britain boycotting France, made a similar link between Dreyfus and British tyranny over "la malheureuse Irlande", as did *L'Echo de Paris*, 17 September, contending that British justice & charity should begin at home.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Le Gaulois*, *Le Siècle*, and *Le Figaro*, 18 September.

¹¹⁰¹ *Le Matin*, 18 September.

¹¹⁰² *Le Matin*, 15 September.

¹¹⁰³ I.e. The housewife who refused to buy haricots verts, the restaurateur who ceased serving Bordeaux wine, the "Grande Dame" announcing the removal of the "Made in France" tag from her gloves, and Weymouth City Council, opting to buy granite from Guernsey rather than a less expensive firm in Cherbourg, only then to discover that the latter was a British company with solely British capital and workers - *Le Matin*, 19 & 21 September.

¹¹⁰⁴ *L'Echo de Paris*, 15 September.

throwing the decapitated body of the Mahdi into the Nile, rather than the Boers.¹¹⁰⁵ The *Journal des Débats* approach, in common with *Le Matin* perceiving the Dreyfus case as an opportunity for British Francophobes to air their generalised dislike of France, demonstrates that although a link between Dreyfus and the Boer War could be explicitly made, for the most part it was not.¹¹⁰⁶

The exceptions to this were the papers whose preoccupations were the most anti-Semitic. Such was the case for *L'Echo de Paris* which spanned the political and class gap between the most radical nationalist papers and the more refined, if still nationalist, *Le Gaulois*, *Le Figaro* and *Le Soleil*. Anti-Semitism was directed at foreign Jews as well as French, in the assertions that most of the foreign press “est dans les mains Israélites”, and particularly vitriolic attacks on *The Times* Correspondent Blowitz as “un juif d’Hongrie, aux gages des Anglais, naturalisé français pour être tranquille”, which served to explain (and discredit) opinion abroad on Dreyfus.¹¹⁰⁷ Firmly anti-Dreyfusard, Gabriel Syveton, citing criticisms from *The Times*, *Telegraph* and *Contemporary Review* as well as the German press, contended that “L’Europe n’a donc pas, à vrai dire, d’opinion à elle sur l’affaire Dreyfus. Elle a adopté toute faite l’opinion des Dreyfusards français”. The suggestion that foreign interests were so obviously served by Dreyfusism that it must have originated from abroad was incorporated within wider contemporary preoccupations over French vulnerability; the notion that foreigners were deliberately setting out to weaken the French army, leaving France open to invasion, was expressly articulated, thereby rallying support of a generalised, xenophobic nature, centred on the army as the core of the French nation.¹¹⁰⁸ Relative to the Dreyfus issue, the Boer War played a subordinate role, as it merely illustrated a range of traditional British vices and

¹¹⁰⁵ *Le Matin*, 13 September.

¹¹⁰⁶ *Le Journal des Débats*, 17 September.

¹¹⁰⁷ *L'Echo de Paris*, 22 & 16 September.

¹¹⁰⁸ *L'Echo de Paris*, 2 September.

practices, the boasting about British chivalry, liberty and justice, invoked for Dreyfus but hypocritically put to one side when it was a case of British commercial interests and “insatiable cupidité”.¹¹⁰⁹

None of this came anywhere near forwarding Jewish plotting as the all-embracing explanation that distinguished the outpourings of *La Libre Parole* from all others on the conflict. An identification of pro-Boer with anti-Semitic sentiment has long been noted by historians exploring currents in British anti-war sentiment.¹¹¹⁰ As a means of generating opposition to the war, those on the left in Britain happily played on ideas of “Jews as orchestrators of world wide imperialism”.¹¹¹¹ The position of *La Libre Parole* differed from left-wing British opponents of the war for “the various socialists, radicals and labourites” were primarily against what they deemed an immoral war, enlisting prejudice against “Jewish finance” as a (subordinate) means to that end whereas Edouard Drumont and his associates were staunch anti-Semites using the conflict as a means of further justifying anti-Semitism.¹¹¹²

Hence the war was just a manifestation of a wider global struggle; Jules de la Haye readily aligned, in global terms, “l’alliance des réformés de France avec les réformés d’Angleterre et d’Allemagne”, and all three in turn with freemasonry and Jews.¹¹¹³ The war was reinterpreted as primarily a Jewish phenomenon. It was necessary “pour sauver Chamberlain et ses filibusters qui lui sont associés, les banquiers juifs ou les

¹¹⁰⁹ *L’Echo de Paris*, 14 October.

¹¹¹⁰ For example, Claire Hirschfield, “The Anglo-Boer War and the Issue of Jewish Culpability” in *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 15.4 (October 1980), 619-631.

¹¹¹¹ Stephen Koss (ed), *The Pro Boers* (London, University of Chicago Press: 1973), 26, 85 & 94, citing opinions of J.A.Hobson, Edward Carpenter and John Burns. Lowry, “Wider Impact”, Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 205, also refers to linked pro-Boer, anti-Semitic sentiments among British army officers, including those sent to fight the war itself.

¹¹¹² Hirschfield, “Jewish Culpability”, *Contemporary History*, Vol 15.4 (1980), 619.

¹¹¹³ *La Libre Parole*, 22 September.

concessionnaires de mines de Johannesburg”.¹¹¹⁴ Rhodes was advised by the Jewish millionaire Alfred Beit in the 1890s. Now Balfour was obliged to consult Rothschild on policy, wealthy Jews having bought British politicians and public opinion.¹¹¹⁵ *La Libre Parole*, further, quoted an unnamed English colonel, unwilling to fight noble Boers, unafraid to be called “paysans”, at the behest of a press owned by Jews-“Ces sont eux qui ont lentement préparé et rendue inévitable cette guerre inique contre ce petit peuple boer”.¹¹¹⁶ Equally, it circulated the socialist Hyndman’s assertions that “les juifs capitalistes, courtiers de la bourse, la plupart étrangers, demandent la guerre”, so the British press, all owned by Jews, was, whether Tory, Liberal or Radical otherwise, inciting Jingo demonstrations and pushing for war.¹¹¹⁷

Jewish grand influence in Britain was matched in South Africa, where Johannesburg boasted no fewer than 17 synagogues for a town of 60,000 souls, thus a “Fléau Juif au Transvaal”, as elsewhere.¹¹¹⁸ Uitlanders were aligned with the Jews, *La Libre Parole* focussing on the Jewish origin of “volontaires anglais” who had formed a “corps de 500 hommes montés, qu’on appelle le Imperial Light Horse”.¹¹¹⁹ Uitlander Jews were “furieux que les Boers leur aient refusé le droit de citoyens”, but the Boers’ worry about Jews taking office was justifiable, given “ce sont les Juifs qui ont corrompu ce pays par les pots-de-vin, demandes de monopoles, etc”. Britain was therefore making war on Transvaal to satisfy Jewish greed there and in London.¹¹²⁰ However, *La Libre Parole*

¹¹¹⁴ *La Libre Parole*, 15 September.

¹¹¹⁵ *La Libre Parole*, 13 October.

¹¹¹⁶ *La Libre Parole*, 7 October.

¹¹¹⁷ *La Libre Parole*, 6 October.

¹¹¹⁸ *La Libre Parole*, 15 September & 5 October.

¹¹¹⁹ *La Libre Parole*, 22 September. Aubrey Woolls-Sampson and Karri Davis - Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 108, and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 70, identifying the pair as leading pre-war Uitlander agitators.

¹¹²⁰ *La Libre Parole*, 5 October, also accusing South African Jews of incidentally “profitent de la panique pour faire acheter les terres, les maisons, les terrains miniers à quelques francs ce qui en vaudra dans quelques mois quand la calme sera rétabli”.

engaged in little praise of the Boers themselves, underlining the extent to which the main preoccupation in its coverage was, as always, anti-Semitism.

The link between Dreyfus and the Boers was also made with unusual directness:

L'Angleterre, qui s'est fait dans le monde l'exécutrice des basses oeuvres de la Juiverie cosmopolite, agit à Pretoria comme elle agissait à Paris. Ici, Dreyfus, là - bas les Uitlanders. Pour les Juifs, l'un comme les autres ne sont qu'un prétexte.¹¹²¹

In sum, "La guerre en Transvaal est une 'affaire' juive comme l'affaire Dreyfus".¹¹²²

The Question of French Intervention; a Case Study in self-image.

To Monson, the Paris press represented a groundswell of opinion in favour of intervention to stop a widely decried war. Nationalist *L'Intransigeant*, *L'Autorité*, and Ernest Judet in *Le Petit Journal* had the most straightforward lines to take. Judet's railing that "l'intolérable tyrannie des Anglo-Saxons commettra un crime du plus sous les yeux des nations impenément braves" was echoed by De Cassagnac in *L'Autorité*, condemning the war.¹¹²³ Having already urged France as a matter of duty to send money and volunteers to the aid of Transvaal, with barbs against the neutrality of other nations, he fulminated:

Les Anglais, en essayant de conquérir Transvaal commettent un crime que rien, rien ne justifie. Le bandit qui attend un voyageur au coin du bois, et lui demande la bourse et la vie, est moins méprisable.¹¹²⁴

It was natural that such circumstances should raise the question of what the French could do to stop the British, and therefore reflections on France's own (in)capacities to act, much as had been the case after Fashoda. The same themes cropped up. De Cassagnac, looking back to a nostalgic past, bemoaned French internal affairs as too preoccupying: "Donc la vieille France, jadis si noble, la France des paladins, n'enverra ni un homme ni

¹¹²¹ *La Libre Parole*, 5 October.

¹¹²² *La Libre Parole*, 6 October.

¹¹²³ *Le Petit Journal* & *L'Autorité*, 11 October.

¹¹²⁴ *L'Autorité*, 8 & 12 October.

un écu aux boers”.¹¹²⁵ The implicitly anti-Republican nature of this sentiment was explicit four days later in castigation of the cowardly, miserable and indifferent policies practiced by “notre malheureux pays... tombé au-dessous de tout grâce à la République”.¹¹²⁶

These attitudes of self-disgust were not universal. Looking outwards, *Le Soleil* not only accepted the sense of non-intervention but, far from taking Boer intransigence as an example to emulate, argued against behaviour likely to lead to a war that would only result in a more powerful Britain in charge of the gold mines.¹¹²⁷ In contrast to the more nationalistic papers of the right, Leudet was unapologetic about official French policy of “la neutralité la plus absolue”, in citing British press reports of Kruger searching for Italian assistance suggesting that the Kaiser’s 1896 telegram to him “n’a pas peu contribué à faire naître dans l’esprit du président du Transvaal de dangereuses illusions”.¹¹²⁸ The interests of peace would be better served by Kruger realising that no European support would be forthcoming.¹¹²⁹

On the left, the focus shifted in two directions. Firstly, there was the suggestion that France should intervene as mediator. *Le Radical* argued for verbal intervention from Loubet to stay British aggression.¹¹³⁰ Lack of any such initiative prompted some domestic criticism in *La Lanterne*’s reflection that France was not being dishonoured from without as Britain was by Chamberlain, but rather from within by its own “politiciens les plus méprisables et les plus vils”.¹¹³¹ However, the second main focus was on the absence of any international action. Whereas Fashoda had principally

¹¹²⁵ *L’Intransigeant*, 4 October.

¹¹²⁶ *L’Autorité*, 8 October.

¹¹²⁷ *Le Soleil*, 13 September.

¹¹²⁸ *Le Figaro*, 21 September.

¹¹²⁹ *Le Figaro*, 30 September.

¹¹³⁰ *Le Radical*, 10 October.

¹¹³¹ *La Lanterne*, 14 October.

broached the inertia of individual nations, in 1899 The Hague Conference could be placed centre stage, making the Anglo-Boer conflict the occasion for a collective inertia. The idea that Germany and Russia would accept territorial concessions in return for acquiescence to British aggression inspired *La Petite République*'s observation "Quant à l'attitude générale des gouvernements européens, elle passe les bornes de cynisme...et cela moins de six mois après la clôture de la conférence de la paix".¹¹³² This paper took the new gun developed at Woolwich arsenal as one of the "premiers résultats de la conférence de la paix", with the sarcastic conclusion "C'est ainsi que la vieille 'queen' se prépare au désarmement".¹¹³³ More detailed resort to The Hague was left to *Le Radical*, whose rhetorical question "Que penser des gouvernements européens qui vont laisser s'accomplir une agression criminelle quelques mois après la conférence de la Haye?" had turned by the eve of the war into an attack on participants at the conference for not invoking their own arbitration procedures.¹¹³⁴ On the left, Europe-wide reflections transformed into a vehicle for criticism of Imperial Russia of a quality only slightly removed from that which followed Fashoda. Bitterness hardly short of that directed against "la politique belliqueuse du cabinet qui mène M Chamberlain" was reserved for the Tsar, "le pompeux promoteur du désarmement général, l'évocat attendri des bienfaits de la liberté et de la justice entre les nations pourvu qu'il ne s'agisse pas de celles qu'il maintient sous un joug de fer".¹¹³⁵

This merged into a more generalised lament not so much (as on the right) for a missed opportunity for France to benefit directly and elsewhere from Britain's South African preoccupation as a continent-wide failure to recognise and act on the "devoir moral" of

¹¹³² *La Petite République*, 2 October.

¹¹³³ *La Petite République*, 1 September.

¹¹³⁴ *Le Radical*, 12 September.

¹¹³⁵ *Le Radical*, 11 October.

mediation.¹¹³⁶ Having already remarked that “Europe est dans un état tel de veulerie que les plus grandes crimes peuvent se commettre sous les yeux, sans qu’elle fasse un effort pour les prévenir”, *Le Radical* mournfully observed that “L’Europe n’ose bouger, intervenir; chaque gouvernement a peur de son ombre”, but this was when it came to imposing an arbitration rather than intervening directly to break British power for their own benefit.¹¹³⁷

Revenge for Fashoda? December 1899-January 1900.

Nicholson’s later recollection that “Our initial defeats were greeted with a general howl of *Schadenfreude* from Rotterdam to Memel, from Vigo to Irkutsk” would suggest a hardening of the Paris press’ tone towards Britain in the early stages of the war.¹¹³⁸ Examination of the Paris press concentrated on “Black Week” (10-20 December 1899) and the week after Spion Kop (24-31 January 1900) confirms that, as the war progressed, press reports altered not only in content but, to a degree, tone. As with coverage of Fashoda during the incident itself, this was not however always in the one, obvious, direction.

That there was some malicious pleasure derived from reports of British defeats, together with understandable cynicism about press releases from London that tried to put the most favourable gloss on them possible, was foreseeable. On the right, what had begun as a David and Goliath confrontation became after Spion Kop the comeuppance of “eux qui ont un si haute idée d’eux-mêmes, qui croient si ardemment à leur supériorité et à leur omnipotence”.¹¹³⁹ Keeping to size as a metaphor, *Le Gaulois* revelled in world disapproval of “le colosse britannique se ruer sur le pygmée boer”, but most abundant of all throughout were cartoons and commentary depicting Britain as “le colosse aux pieds

¹¹³⁶ *Le Radical*, 14 October.

¹¹³⁷ *Le Radical*, 17 September & 9 October.

¹¹³⁸ Nicholson, “Origins and Development” *International Affairs*, Vol 30.4 (October 1954), 408-409.

¹¹³⁹ *Le Gaulois*, 15 October/*L’Autorité*, 2 November 1899, and *Le Figaro*, 27 January 1900.

d'argile", and a source of amusement to the rest of Europe.¹¹⁴⁰ This did not escape the attention of Monson, wearying of the "use of the well-worn metaphor of 'the giant with clay feet' which does duty in every newspaper comment upon England's present position".¹¹⁴¹ Faced with "cette réalité consolante de l'Angleterre impuissante, succèdent à la légende terrifiante et fausse de l'Angleterre invaincue", it was the nationalist right that, predictably proved most vituperative.¹¹⁴² *L'Autorité*'s idea that the Boers should hang "prisoners man for man with the Boers killed by Lyddite shells" particularly appalled Monson.¹¹⁴³ However, this was not entirely new, Henri Rochefort having suggested along similar lines in *L'Intransigeant*, as the war began, that Kruger's first mistake had been to abstain from shooting Jameson and his accomplices in 1896, his "magnanimité" having instead left British politicians with an impression of Boer "faiblesse".¹¹⁴⁴

Linkage with Fashoda arose more often. Ernest Judet marked the first anniversary with a piece lambasting "les politiciens surpris en flagrant délit d'imprévoyance, d'ignorance et de lâcheté" whose worry over war, unnecessary given British reliance on "mercenaires... d'acheter la puissance avec de l'or", had caused them to accept defeat.¹¹⁴⁵ The nationalist right continued to maintain of the Boers that:

ils auront donné une fière et mémorable leçon à cette Europe lâche qui hait l'Angleterre et n'ose rien contre elle... Il y en a surtout pour nous, pour notre gouvernement qui dans la question de Fachoda s'est exécuté par la honteuse fuite que l'on sait.¹¹⁴⁶

¹¹⁴⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 25 January 1900/*L'Autorité*, 4 November, *Le Petit Caporal*, 17 December 1899, and pictures 6.6 & 6.7.

¹¹⁴¹ NA, FO 27.3493, Monson to Salisbury, 4 January 1900.

¹¹⁴² *L'Autorité*, 13 December 1899.

¹¹⁴³ NA, FO 27/3459.466, Monson to Salisbury, 7 November & *L'Autorité*, 7 November.

¹¹⁴⁴ *L'Intransigeant*, 13 October.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Le Petit Journal*, 6 November, echoed by *Le Petit Caporal*, 17 December, equally critical of Britain, "toujours à la recherche de nouvelles proies, insolente et cruelle" and a French government characterised by an exaggerated fear of British strength and "le cynisme de désavouer Marchand".

¹¹⁴⁶ *L'Autorité*, 2 November.

Boer-Fashoda linkage seeped, too, into the mainstream conservative papers, when *Le Figaro* gave Eugène Etienne licence to argue that both events were orchestrated towards the Cape-Cairo rail link and, more generally, the “plan grandiose Cecil Rhodes-Chamberlain” to assure “la suprématie de la race anglo-saxonne”.¹¹⁴⁷ *Le Gaulois* followed, claiming Boer successes as French, to trace a line of confrontations through Fashoda, a recent boxing match and the siege of Ladysmith, to echo Etienne in arguing that Delcassé should take advantage of British distraction to wring some concessions out of London on Egypt.¹¹⁴⁸ By the time of Black Week, the easy victory at Omdurman had become a reason why the British had expected the quick victories in South Africa that had in actual fact eluded them.¹¹⁴⁹

The importance of Chamberlain receded in press coverage of South Africa, with perceptions of him, and of themes linked to him, evolving with the war. Considered by *L'Autorité* to be the one really running the British government, he remained “ce dilettante fanfaron, avec son langage provocant”.¹¹⁵⁰ *Le Figaro*, looking forward to a revival in Salisbury's power, agreed that Chamberlain was running the government though not fit to do so, but *Le Gaulois* differed, in discarding him after Spion Kop as “l'idole d'hier”.¹¹⁵¹ In distinguishing between Chamberlain and “les hommes d'état anglais, au sens traditionnel du mot”, Valfrey followed the lead of *Le Journal des Débats* whose antipathy lay not so much in Chamberlain's Britishness as a conservative distaste for his populist approach to politics and his ruffianly “diplomatie nouvelle”. Chamberlain's ascendancy marked a more general rise of language “de la réunion publique ou d'un journaliste sans mandat”, at the expense of the prudent and circumspect “bon ton” of old diplomats. That the Chamberlain speech prompting these judgements

¹¹⁴⁷ *Le Figaro*, 7 November.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 18 November.

¹¹⁴⁹ *L'Autorité*, 8 December, *Le Petit Caporal*, 18 December *Le Petit Journal*, 19 December.

¹¹⁵⁰ *L'Autorité*, 11 & 9 December.

¹¹⁵¹ *Le Figaro*, 12 December 1899 & *Le Gaulois*, 31 January 1900.

contained advances to Germany, Russia, Japan and the USA did, however, reaffirm Alcide Ebray's view of Chamberlain as both an "agitateur gallophobe, partisan de la guerre".¹¹⁵²

In one permutation of this, a *Figaro* cartoon expressed its condescension by depicting Chamberlain as a misbehaving child, surrounded by symbolic national figures-Russia and Marianne amused, Uncle Sam and Germania scowling, hands over their ears and therefore, presumably, impervious to his overtures.¹¹⁵³ Continuing criticism of Chamberlain through the lens of class was matched by another, still drawing on perceptions of British attitudes towards money, that related his quest for personal profit to the war, hence in the cartoon the roll labelled "actions mines d'or" protruding from his pocket. Even the relatively moderate *Matin* could not resist repeating claims that the momentary delay in news from Spion Kop had been motivated by the desire to sell mine shares at inflated values – "c'est à dire que les protégés de M. Chamberlain, et peut-être M.Chamberlain lui-même, ont profité d'une sanglante défaite de l'armée de leur pays pour opérer un fouteux coup de bourse".¹¹⁵⁴ The *Figaro*'s cartoonist, taking an altogether more macabre approach after Spion Kop, interpreted British casualties as a distraction to the minister, if still pinpointing money or shares as the latter's overriding preoccupation.¹¹⁵⁵

On the left, inasmuch as *Le Radical* concerned itself with Britain, it endeavoured to engage with it in a wider framework of a common humanity, one part of which was an explicit, if inconsistent, challenge to Tainean notions of Britishness. Rather than ignore national stereotypes like *La Petite République*, *Le Radical* made a mould-breaking

¹¹⁵² *Le Journal des Débats*, 2 December 1899.

¹¹⁵³ Picture 6.8

¹¹⁵⁴ *L'Intransigeant*, cited by *Le Matin*, 28 January 1900, cf. Picture 6.9.

¹¹⁵⁵ Picture 6.10.

attempt to escape from them in an impassioned plea against the depictions of the typical Englishman, especially in cartoons, as “invariablement un homme de deux mètres de haut, avec des cheveux roux hérissés, avec des dents en touches d’orgue et des pieds qui n’en finissent pas”, with similar “caractères grotesques” attributed to the women. Defying anyone to find on the streets of London “dix exemplaires de ces anglais légendaires”, it concluded with the comments that “les hommes au point du vue moral sont partout les mêmes”, with no physical differences enough “pour entretenir les haines internationales”.¹¹⁵⁶ In consideration of British opposition to the conflict, explicit reference to the religious motivations that drove Gladstone and others would not have been in place within the anti-clerical columns of *Le Radical*. Conversely, with the outbreak and progress of the war it did fall back on traditional descriptions of a temperamental reluctance to abandon long-prepared plans for seizing control of “La partie la plus productrice, la plus riche du continent noir”, the Boers in face of “un adversaire implacable et sans scrupule”, Britons notable for “le sens pratique développé”, and their “sang froid”, despite the profound emotion of defeat.¹¹⁵⁷

Unlike *Le Siècle*, *Le Radical* was in no doubt that the cause of “le brave petit peuple boer” was that of justice, arguing that “Chamberlain n’est pas éternel et l’Angleterre peut recouvrer la raison”, but as the war developed it staked out a position of more explicitly universal humanitarianism.¹¹⁵⁸ This emerged most clearly in its reactions to the first major defeats of the British army of December 1899:

Ce n’est pas sans une profonde impression de tristesse que, tout en faisant des vœux pour les armes de troupes républicaines, on pense aux soldats anglais qui tombent là-bas, aux nombreuses familles qui pleurent leurs enfants, aux résultants effroyables de l’ambition de Lord Chamberlain qui, devant l’histoire, portera l’effroyable responsabilité des désastres qui accablent son pays, du sang humain répandu à flots.¹¹⁵⁹

¹¹⁵⁶ *Le Radical*, 30 September 1899.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Le Radical*, 6, 12 October, 14 & 18 December.

¹¹⁵⁸ *Le Radical*, 12 & 14 October.

¹¹⁵⁹ *Le Radical*, 18 December 1899.

This was followed after Spion Kop with the comment that:

Les Anglais qu'elle envoie...se faire démolir sur les bords de la Tugela sont des victimes, au même titre que les Boers, et c'est pourquoi je ne puis, sans un frémissement d'horreur et de pitié, lire les chiffres de tués et blessés dont l'arithmétique couvre de la chair humaine.¹¹⁶⁰

Reflecting French internal preoccupations, *Le Radical* used such comments as a springboard to attack those who took the authors of any reflections on the horrors of war as “sans patrie”, and army haters. If by reverting to stereotypes of overeating Britons, *Le Radical* expressed both sympathy for “les soldats anglais qui, atteints par les balles boers, gisent, pantelants et râlant dans les ambulances”, in direct contrast to the largely unconcerned Chamberlain, claimed to be “à l'heure où ils agonisent, en train de dîner d'un succulent romsteck”.¹¹⁶¹ *Le Figaro*, too, responded to the casualties of Black Week arguably with a degree of sympathy for the bereaved, if again lacing this with criticism of Chamberlain, and depicting a typically corpulent John Bull figure as the archetypal Englishman.¹¹⁶²

The British ambassador remarked that many French journalists were only echoing their Russian colleagues in “the agreeable prospect of doing mischief to England whilst she is hampered by her engagements in South Africa”.¹¹⁶³ Such a prospect continued initially to be approached with the same mix of internationalism, idealistic nationalism, historical Anglophobia and self-interest as before, epitomised in mid-November when *Le Gaulois* aired what Monson castigated as “a puerile production” entitled “le Rêve de Bonaparte”, in which Napoleon rose from his tomb to demand an invasion of Britain to impose terms on “L'Anglais, l'éternel ennemi”.¹¹⁶⁴ More than a military victory, international justice,

¹¹⁶⁰ *Le Radical*, 29 January 1900.

¹¹⁶¹ *Le Radical*, 29 January 1900, see also *L'Echo de Paris*, 28 September 1899, referring to all the British as “gros mangeurs, grands buveurs comme il convient en ces climats.”

¹¹⁶² Picture 6.11.

¹¹⁶³ NA, FO 27/3459.436, Monson to Salisbury, 20 October 1899.

¹¹⁶⁴ NA, FO 27/3459.475, Monson to Salisbury, 13 November.

or Britain's withdrawal from Egypt and South Africa, this role as "les vengeurs d'humanité" would achieve for the French a return to their national character. Acting thus:

La France, revenue à elle-même, rentrée dans sa voie naturelle, humanitaire par destination, justicière par vocation, attend qu'il plaise à quelques-uns de ses fils égarés de reconnaître que la république militante, audacieuse et fière est plus belle, plus noble, plus comptée, plus respectée que la république affalée tendant le dos au monde afin d'être sûre d'y recevoir des coups de pied.¹¹⁶⁵

Citing Britain's weakness and Europe-wide unpopularity, *L'Autorité* pressed for intervention throughout the first three months of the war.¹¹⁶⁶ On the moderate right, however, by 10 December 1899 far from advocating intervention *Le Figaro* was giving space to minister of Marine, Lockroy, pointing to the weakness of the French navy and colonial defences, and the preponderance of British ships over France and the Triple Alliance combined, to argue for the impossibility of intervention. In a veiled reference to nationalists of *L'Intransigeant*, *L'Autorité*, and *La Libre Parole* ilk, determined to insult the Queen and her ministers, Lockroy's fervent desire was "qu'ils se calment... et qu'ils se taisent".¹¹⁶⁷

Whereas coverage of the question of intervention was partly dependent on the availability of news relevant to such a proposal, and "Black Week" and Spion Kop prompted elaboration on *Le Radical*'s universalism, at *La Libre Parole* the war's course had little impact on the paper's preoccupations. It remained "une guerre juive, une simple opération financière", and a stick with which to beat Dreyfusards, *Le Siècle*, and Delcassé for not asserting himself against Chamberlain.¹¹⁶⁸ The usual conspiratorial paranoia persisted, whether it was the British doing a deal, with the Jews to get Lanessan appointed to the French Ministry of Marine in return for which Britain would lend its

¹¹⁶⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 13 November.

¹¹⁶⁶ *L'Autorité*, 4 November, 13 & 14 December.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Le Figaro*, 10 December.

¹¹⁶⁸ *La Libre Parole*, 12 December.

support to Dreyfus, or “la guerre de dépossession et de piraterie financière” orchestrated by “l’Albion, judaisée dans son organisme gouvernemental”, or Chamberlain as “l’instrument de Cecil Rhodes et sa séquelle juive”.¹¹⁶⁹ Above and beyond what were, in large measure, domestic preoccupations projected onto a conflict abroad, *La Libre Parole* fell back on precisely the sorts of national stereotypes that *Le Radical* professed to abhor-hence “le pharisaïsme protestant de la nation la plus collet-montée du monde entier”, or indeed “l’Albion aux dents longues”.¹¹⁷⁰ Hypocrisy remained a leading theme, from Drumont’s early November piece linking British criticism of French officers at Rennes to the far greater wrongs being carried out by their British counterparts in South Africa, through another “bel exemple de ce pharisaïsme protestant” in December, to Spion Kop’s aftermath.¹¹⁷¹ Most frequently, it cropped up in combination with other traditional ideas:

Aux deux côtés de la statue colossale qui personnifiait l’Angleterre...veillant l’egoïsme et l’hypocrisie. Devant elle rampant le léopard, symbole et gardien de perfidies, l’icône monstrueuse foulait aux pieds de la justice et la vérité enchaînées. D’une main elle semait l’or, destructeur des consciences, de l’autre elle tenait la Bible ouverte et cette Bible éblouissait les croyants tandis que l’or aveuglait les autres.¹¹⁷²

On the right as a whole, much the same ideas were aired, with bestial imagery, as in 1898, much in evidence. Hence *L’Autorité* exposed “la nation de proie au pilori de l’histoire”, revelling in the early setbacks of “la féroce et lâche fauve qu’est le léopard anglais”, then self-consciously going onto declare “Nous ne relèverons pas, pour la centième fois, l’hypocrisie de cette attitude qui s’efforce d’imputer aux Boers la responsabilité de la guerre”.¹¹⁷³ *Le Gaulois* too insisted that “l’egoïsme a été toujours le règle de sa conduite internationale”, if in the same piece commenting less critically,

¹¹⁶⁹ *La Libre Parole*, 15 December 1899 and 25 & 28 January 1900.

¹¹⁷⁰ *La Libre Parole*, 25 January 1900.

¹¹⁷¹ *La Libre Parole*, 3 November, 10 December 1899 and 25 January 1900.

¹¹⁷² *La Libre Parole*, 27 January 1900.

¹¹⁷³ *L’Autorité*, 3, 4 & 6 November 1899.

though hardly less stereotypically, on British pragmatism in the hope that this would outweigh imperial pride in persuading the British to negotiate an early peace.¹¹⁷⁴

Perhaps the most prominent example of old traits finding new life in the circumstances of war was embodied in reporting of reactions to the early defeats. *Le Matin* having previously remarked on how “le public anglais... accueilli avec un phlegme parfait la nouvelle que cette guerre n’était désormais plus qu’une question d’heures”, even Paul de Cassagnac had to admit the dignity of the British in November, observing “du calme, du sang-froid partout, et au fond une froide résolution, qui certainement ira jusqu’à bout”.¹¹⁷⁵ Monson was duly pleased by the “ungrudging acknowledgements of the tenacity and equanimity under adverse circumstances for which the British have always been remarkable”, which went on into December.¹¹⁷⁶ The reflection on how French behaviour contrasted, implicit in *Le Gaulois* remarking “ils se montrent très dignes dans la crise qu’ils traversent. Aucune récrimination, aucune révolte, aucune violence, aucune signe extérieur de la vanité blessée”, became explicit in *L’Autorité*, as a lesson and example to France.¹¹⁷⁷ Black Week occasioned more sang froid, a simple “hommage à l’attitude calme et digne du peuple anglais” relayed from the Berlin press through *Le Matin*’s columns, as *Le Gaulois* praised “le bon sens et le sang froid britannique”, and *Le Figaro* “la dignité qui convient à un race impériale” and “la résolution et le calme des Anglais”, whereas *L’Autorité* could not resist questioning what lay behind the public’s apparent calm: “il n’est pas plus inaccessible aux émotions que celui des autres peuples; seulement la froideur de tempérament qui caractérise la nation britannique permet de les dissimuler plus facilement”.¹¹⁷⁸ Echoing 1898’s concern over France’s internal instability, Spion Kop, again, prompted explicit reflection on French excitability relative

¹¹⁷⁴ *Le Gaulois*, 15 December.

¹¹⁷⁵ *Le Matin*, 19 September, *L’Autorité*, 5 November.

¹¹⁷⁶ NA, FO 27/3459.462, Monson to Salisbury, 3 November.

¹¹⁷⁷ *Le Gaulois*, 4 November.

¹¹⁷⁸ *Le Matin*, 19, *Le Gaulois*, 19, *Le Figaro* 12 & 15, and *L’Autorité*, 13 December 1899.

to British calm over the loss of “une colline de quelques metres en hauteur... Est-ce une raison pour faire des manifestations dans les rues, comme de simples français?”¹¹⁷⁹

Less flattering were the torrents of commentary on the British army. To an extent, there was little about this that was either original or distinctively French, hence German or Austrian cartoons mocking Britain’s military performance were freely repeated in the Paris press from a very early stage in the war.¹¹⁸⁰ Little difference in tone can be distinguished between these and, say, their equivalent in *Le Figaro*, making play of an early attempt by British troops to break out of Ladysmith that was frustrated by the bolting of some mules, assigned to carry artillery pieces and ammunition.¹¹⁸¹ These rebellious creatures were the subject of repeated attention across the spectrum of the right. Reporting British purchases of 7,000 new pack animals in New Orleans, *L’Autorité* wryly commented “Souhaitons pour leur acquêreurs que ces mulets n’aient pas d’histoire se rendent moins célèbres que les fameuses mules de Ladysmith”, with René d’Aral, and later *Le Matin*, remarking that escaping mules could constitute no reasonable excuse for the defeat at Magersfontein, referencing them.¹¹⁸² Prefiguring *La Guerre Fatale*, one repeated theme on the nationalist and conservative right was that of British troops being mercenaries, men who were lured to volunteer by promises of food and money rather than belief in their cause, and who therefore readily surrendered or retreated rather than stand and fight.¹¹⁸³ *L’Autorité* went further, in its repeated insistence that officers on the battlefield, in shedding all visible signs of their office to avoid the attention of Boer snipers, lost prestige and were somehow dishonouring their

¹¹⁷⁹ *Le Figaro*, 28 January 1900.

¹¹⁸⁰ See pictures 6.12 & 6.13.

¹¹⁸¹ See picture 6.14. On this incident of 29-30 October 1899, see letter from Lieut. General Sir George White to Sir Redvers Buller, 2 December 1899, quoted by *The Boer War Ladysmith and Mafeking 1900* (London, HMSO; 1999), 10, Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 152-154, and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 81-82.

¹¹⁸² *L’Autorité*, 5 November, *Le Gaulois* 18 November, and *Matin* 14 December.

¹¹⁸³ *L’Autorité*, 7 November & 19 December, *Le Gaulois*, 13 November.

profession.¹¹⁸⁴ All of this fed implicitly into French domestic debates about the nature of their own army, rendered topical by Dreyfus. More broadly, there was abundant, more or less sober, reflection on the unexpectedly poor quality of the British army, and analyses as to why the Boers were enjoying success.¹¹⁸⁵ This did not, though, preclude the formation of moral judgements as to the state of mind of the British military - *L'Autorité* and *La Libre Parole* were foremost in criticism of British cowardice, but other sections of the press followed, across to the left.¹¹⁸⁶

Counter currents?

Criticisms of the Boers, before and after the war began, were by no means wholly absent from elements of the French press. Notably, *Le Figaro* drew on German reports to argue that “c’est mal servir les intérêts de la paix de faire croire au président Kruger qu’il peut compter sur un seul appui en Europe”, questioning his competence as the outcome of any fighting, if the Republics were alone, could not be in doubt to him.¹¹⁸⁷ Leyds later protested against *Le Figaro*’s disrespect and “attaques injurieuses proférées contre un chef d’état que son grand âge, la vénération dont il est entouré par ses concitoyens et sa noble conduite à l’heure présente sur la théâtre de la guerre auraient dû suffire à garantir contre de telles offenses”.¹¹⁸⁸ It was one of two papers styling themselves the champion of French investors involved in South African businesses. The other was *Le Soleil*, which highlighted the likelihood of war occasioning theft, destruction and dislocation of industries in which French citizens had invested. With Britain in no hurry to end any

¹¹⁸⁴ *L'Autorité*, 11 & 19 December.

¹¹⁸⁵ *L'Autorité*, 8 & 13 December 1899 (militia reinforcements not “vrai soldats”, lack of overall numbers) both echoed by *Le Figaro* 28 January 1900, *Le Gaulois*, 16 & 17 December 1899 (pitiable organisation, ignorance of local geography, failure to use scouts) *Le Matin*, 12 December 1899 (failure to use scouts/lack of maps) *Le Radical*, 26 January 1900 (internal bickering/lack of energy)

¹¹⁸⁶ *Le Matin*, 9 and *L'Autorité*, 13 December 1899, stating that British Hussars barricaded themselves into their quarters rather than go to war, *La Libre Parole*, 12 December glorying in the “véritable panique” at Stormberg and the numbers surrendering being disproportionate to the wounded, & 17 December deriding the lack of military pride or heroism at Colenso, and *Le Gaulois*, 30 January 1900, sarcastically commenting on the early stages of Spion Kop “Là voilà bien, la grande victoire. Vingt mille contre un, le malheureux Boer devait succomber”. Even *Le Radical*, 10 & 13 December 1899, made the points about the Hussars and the figures of POWs and wounded at Stormberg.

¹¹⁸⁷ *Le Figaro*, 30 & 26 September.

¹¹⁸⁸ *Le Figaro*, 19 November and MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Leyds (Brussels) to Delcassé, 20 November.

war, as British troops assembled and Boer funds ran out, the paper anticipated in the interim mines ceasing to work, and rising crimes committed by blacks at the expense of international capital.¹¹⁸⁹ *Le Soleil*'s weekly "La Vie à Londres" column added fears that gold and mines would be appropriated by the Boer authorities as well as individual potential vandals, openly urging the Transvaal to protect their French investors.¹¹⁹⁰ It questioned why, taking into account that Transvaal was for practical purposes independent in its internal affairs, Kruger had raised the issue of sovereignty, thus drawing British attention to dormant rights of Suzerainty that had not been used, urging "les nécessaires concessions" on "le ruse vieillard" to avoid a suicidal war.¹¹⁹¹

On the whole, however, there can be little doubt of the prevalent hostility towards British policy. The nearest to a sympathetic approach came from *Le Siècle*, subsequently depicted as having taken a "pro-British line", as the only one of the Parisian dailies to defend the British cause against the Boers.¹¹⁹² Some of this perception may be attributable to the right-wing press of the time, de Cassagnac of *L'Autorité* pillorying its editor as "Yves Guyot, l'ami des Anglais".¹¹⁹³ This castigation seeped into the columns of *Le Siècle* itself, but reflected French internal preoccupations as much as the war, as Guyot endeavoured to refute de Cassagnac's description of "*Le Siècle*, organe des Anglais et des juifs en France".¹¹⁹⁴ Its "pro-British" position had less to do with the Boer War than with its stance on French internal politics. Above all others, the Dreyfus case was the issue that most filled the columns of *Le Siècle*. It was in this connection that a British alignment arose most forcefully in the column "Le Bon Renom

¹¹⁸⁹ *Le Soleil*, 6, 2 & 8 October; such harm would "diminuerat le crédit dont la république sud-africaine aura un si grand besoin après la guerre, quel qu'en soit le sort".

¹¹⁹⁰ *Le Soleil*, 2 October.

¹¹⁹¹ *Le Soleil*, 12, 13 & 14 September.

¹¹⁹² Lowry, "Wider Impact", Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 215. See also Bellanger, *Presse Française* (1972), 357.

¹¹⁹³ *L'Autorité*, Quoted in *L'Echo de Paris*, 4 September.

¹¹⁹⁴ *Le Siècle*, 11 October.

de France”, quoting fulsomely from Dreyfusard British newspapers, petitions, and published letters.¹¹⁹⁵ Whilst using British opinions to validate the paper’s virulent hostility to “le jugement de lâcheté”, *Le Siècle* made no attempt at a comprehensive apology for or endorsement of Britain’s policy on Transvaal.¹¹⁹⁶ Instead, it discussed domestic British opposition to war, attacked “les excès belliqueux de la politique de M. Chamberlain”, and echoed its peers in emphasising the inconsistency between his stance towards South Africa now, and that articulated in his past speeches.¹¹⁹⁷

In sum, in *Le Matin* and others to its right, there was a prevalent and discernible hardening line towards Britain by the end of January 1900, opening the way for their reporting of the Léandre affair of February 1900. Even *Le Radical*, despite its attempt to stake out its own humanitarian line, was not immune. Whilst initial expressions of faith that the British political system might ultimately work to stop Chamberlain’s crime against Transvaal becoming the crime of the whole nation would not have been out of place in many ELSP writings, on the right the preoccupations and language applied to “l’hydre des mers... la grande île maudite” were increasingly more akin to something prefiguring Driant’s massive invasion novel.¹¹⁹⁸

Conclusion.

The extent of coverage of the Boer War by French newspapers might tend to contradict the view that most of the time “French people and their parliaments were almost totally apathetic to foreign and colonial affairs”.¹¹⁹⁹ This coverage was especially remarkable given that this was a conflict in which no fundamental French interests were at stake,

¹¹⁹⁵ *Le Siècle*, 13-19, 23 September.

¹¹⁹⁶ *Le Siècle*, 10 September .

¹¹⁹⁷ *Le Siècle*, 25, 28 September, 6 October & 29 September. Compare with *Le Gaulois*, 9 & 28 September.

¹¹⁹⁸ *Le Radical*, 11 October 1899 and *La Libre Parole*, 25 January 1900.

¹¹⁹⁹ Andrew & Kanya-Forstner, “French ‘Colonial Party’”, *Historical Journal*, Vol 14.1 (March 1971), 126.

suggesting therefore a high degree of interest in Britain as well as the war. The hostility to Britain shown in 1899 was sharper than in 1898, ironically given that at Fashoda the French were direct participants in the crisis. That hostility, though mitigated by the persistence of other non controversial news and some intermittent moderation notably on the radical left, focused initially on the figure of Chamberlain, but often extended to wider, sometimes blatantly Anglophobic, consideration of Britain more generally, leading to criticisms of Sciences Po-style preoccupations with the British as a potential model, even as ELSP writers reassessed their feelings on British politics and foreign policy.

Supporting the impression of French disinterest in foreign affairs, though, is the point that, in the Paris press, the significance of both Fashoda and the Boer War lay in their role as a site where French domestic politics were played out, despite the broad unanimity of newspapers' sympathy for the Boers. The nature of the republic and its politicians were reflected in both episodes, mediated by the Dreyfus Case most obviously on the right, and perceptions of France's international standing/power and international morality in the centre and on the left.

When French popular responses to the Boer War are considered positively by historians at all, the picture presented is usually unmitigated hostility, one not discouraged by the growing literature on Anglophobia as a persisting political phenomenon.¹²⁰⁰ Reports on South Africa in the six weeks preceding the outbreak of war and in response to British defeats in December 1899-January 1900, for all that Monson disparaged them, were more textured than this, paling for the most part next to what is most often taken to epitomise Paris press attitudes - the February 1900 Léandre affair, disrespectful

¹²⁰⁰ Mitigated only by the picture of muted apathy towards foreign affairs, and the occasional exception such as *Le Siècle* –Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 245-246.

caricatures of the royal family, and coverage of the concentration camps, notably in satirical magazine *L'Assiette au Beurre* on 28 September 1901.¹²⁰¹ Popular though this latter edition may have been, it should be borne in mind that, in common with short-lived 1901 paper *Le Cri Du Transvaal* which launched a subscription fund supported by Barrès, Rochefort and Drumont, these episodes were ephemeral.¹²⁰²

Whilst this chapter can only hope to address in limited time frames relatively small portions of the voluminous Paris press coverage of the Boer War, this suffices to throw other more dramatic episodes into relief, likewise to challenge the notion that Anglophobia (though without doubt present) was the predominant motivation of all journalists. As a hangover from the war, some shouts, invoking the Boer War, were audible from the crowds on Edward VII's 1 May 1903 official arrival in Paris.¹²⁰³ By day four, these had turned predominantly to cries of "Vive notre roi!", or "Vive Édouard!".¹²⁰⁴ The lack of lasting depth to feelings on the war is apparent not only from the relative absence in the Paris press, especially outside of the nationalist right, of an explicit Fashoda/Boer War linkage in 1899-1900, but also, for all the copious newspaper coverage of the conflict and the more unified tone towards the British, the role of the war in subsequent French memory, far less prominent than Fashoda.¹²⁰⁵

¹²⁰¹ E.g. in Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 115 & 152. See picture 6.15.

¹²⁰² Fabrice Serodes, *Historical use of a caricature The destiny of the perfidious Albion* (27 March 2009), at www.vub.ac.be/C-HIM/Abstracts.htm cites sales of 258,450 copies of this edition; Fortescue, *Third Republic* (2000), 72.

¹²⁰³ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 81, cited shouts of "Vive les Boers, vive la Russie, vive Marchand", Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 202 adding "Vive Fashoda!.. Vive Jeanne d'Arc!"

¹²⁰⁴ Dunlop, *Edward VII* (2004), 204 and Clay, *King, Kaiser* (2006), 229. Additionally, Déroulède, perceiving the significance of the visit for France's diplomatic future, muzzled any Anglophobic agitation amongst his own followers with a threat of expulsion from the Ligue des Patriotes-Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 434.

¹²⁰⁵ Despite German re-use in France in 1940 of Anglophobic propaganda from 1899-1902-Keiger, *France and the World* (2001), 163. Daninos, *Major Thompson* (1957), 79, cites the war merely in a footnote, as one site of three (Fiji, St Helena) at 16 degrees south in latitude where "very nasty things" had been done by the British.

7: The French Boer War Volunteers: Confused Motives and Contested Memories.

Introduction.

The Boer war was not merely fought between troops of the British Empire and the Boers but also entailed the involvement on both sides of thousands of foreigners. Frenchmen, Germans, Dutch and Irish, among many others, fought alongside the Boers as well as acting in other support roles to the troops of the Republics.

The fluctuating tides of war and status of each individual across time make it notoriously difficult to calculate the numbers of French volunteers who fought for the Boers. The nearest that they ever came to being assembled in one place with a formal military organisation was in the two weeks prior to the death of their newly appointed commander, Colonel Georges de Villebois-Mareuil (1847-1900). Two French platoons were formed, one under Comte Pierre de Bréda, and the other Olivier d'Etchegoyen who estimated that Villebois-Mareuil could have led an international legion of 1,500-2,000, inclusive of all European national volunteers (the majority of whom were Dutch or German) in the Republics. In fact, he got about 200, of whom 125 set off with him on his final foray.¹²⁰⁶ Later estimates of foreign volunteers in Boer ranks vary wildly, depending on the sources employed and the exact defining criteria, between 1,100 and 2,800 in total, including between 60 and 231 Frenchmen.¹²⁰⁷

The French volunteers were so numerically few that they were unlikely to prove militarily significant in the balance of the war on a grander scale, and have therefore been either sidelined or altogether ignored in Anglophone histories of the war, with the

¹²⁰⁶ O. d'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois de Campagne Chez les Boers par un Ancien Lieutenant de Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil* (Paris, Calman Lévy: 1901), 120 & 122 and McNab, *French Colonel*, (1975), 149.

¹²⁰⁷ Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 253-6 & 280-1, with McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 160, giving a total international estimate of 2,000.

notable exception of Roy McNab, *The French Colonel, Villebois-Mareuil And The Boers*, (1975).¹²⁰⁸ They were nevertheless well known, and created an impact in France out of all proportion to their small numbers. Villebois-Mareuil had already been a public figure in his own right, thanks to his distinguished French army career, the journalism and books that he had had published, and as a founding member of Action Française. Tombs adds that Villebois-Mareuil “appeared to be a stereotypical French hero”, and had possibly been the model for the character of *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897), written by his cousin Edmond Rostand.¹²⁰⁹ After a trickle of individuals leaving in autumn 1899 on their own initiative, later volunteers were most often openly recruited by Parisian organisations, notably the Comité d’Action de la Jeunesse Française, who had sent some 50 by mid February 1900.¹²¹⁰ Royalist Colonel Monteil, previously a presidential candidate and involved in Déroulède’s attempted February 1899 coup, founded the other principal source of volunteers in October 1899, the Comité français des républiques sud-africaines, which sent among others de Charette and d’Etchegoyen.¹²¹¹ The unrelenting press attention and the outpouring of pamphlets and books elicited by the war naturally included the volunteers’ exploits (and later imprisonments).¹²¹² However, the extent to which interpretations of their actions were sunk into the war, as opposed to strictly French concerns, can be questioned. An embarrassment for a government trying to emphasise its neutral credentials, the volunteers, especially Villebois-Mareuil, achieved

¹²⁰⁸ Outside of the few publications specifically devoted to the volunteers, Jackson, *Boer War* (1999), does not mention them at all, and they come up only once in the authoritative Pakenham, *Boer War* (1991), 389, and 4 times in passing in Bill Nasson, *The South African War 1899-1902* (London, Arnold: 1999), 68, 161, 169 & 191. Three allusions to Villebois-Mareuil cropped up in Eversley Ballard, *The Boer War* (London, Leo Cooper: 1975), xxiii, 93 & 211, solely as an adjunct to quoting from *War Notes*, although Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 61, 253-255 & 311, perhaps rendered the fullest account of Villebois-Mareuil and the volunteers since the allusions in the vast L.S.Amery *Times History of the War in South Africa 1899-1902* (London, Sampson Low: 7 volumes, 1900-9).

¹²⁰⁹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 19 & 244 and Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 427.

¹²¹⁰ *Le Petit Journal*, 14 February 1900 & Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 248-9.

¹²¹¹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 57, 125, 160 & 191 and Prochasson, “An English Crisis?”, Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 265.

¹²¹² Bardoux, *crises belliqueuses* (1906), 517, cited leaflets circulated on behalf of the British case, such as *La vérité sur la guerre en Transvaal*. The 24-page picturebook *La Guerre au Transvaal*, was soon rushed out for public consumption at a price of 10 cents a copy-advert in *Le Matin*, 17 November 1899, Picture 3.2.

a popular resonance most obviously among military circles and on the right, but also on the left.

Who Were the French Volunteers?

Multiple problems of definition arise in considering the French who volunteered to fight on the Boer side. The line between “French” and “Boer” was one blurred, often intentionally, not only by a French press keen to stress the sentimental links of France to the Republics but by the volunteers themselves. The most prominent among those volunteers, Villebois-Mareuil, convinced that the Boers were “essentially French”, wrote that with them “l’air de famille s’est conservé et les coeurs ont gardé toute leur fierté, tout leur élan français”.¹²¹³ Shortly before his death, in the interest of rallying men to his newly forming International legion, Villebois-Mareuil publicly proclaimed “Le sang qui coule dans les veines de ce peuple est en partie de sang français”.¹²¹⁴

There was in effect, rather than a hard and fast distinction, a series of gradations, starting with the likes of General Joubert whose ancestors had left France centuries earlier and who were in terms of language, customs, religion and behaviour the same as the Boers of Dutch origin, but for their surnames. It was common for less thoughtful journalists in passing to claim kinship with Joubert as one of France’s own on the basis of his name alone.¹²¹⁵ Whilst maintaining that “du sang français coule dans les veines de beaucoup de ces heroïques combattants”, *Le Matin* had to concede that the French arrivals in 1688-90 had, not least through deliberate policy of the preponderant Dutch settlers, become “rapidement denationalisés”.¹²¹⁶ Others might have settled in the course of the long

¹²¹³ Lowry, “Wider Impact”, Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 208, excerpt from Villebois-Mareuil personal papers quoted by Annette Keaney, *Kruger De Villebois-Mareuil Deux Heros de la guerre des Boers* (Paris, Editions France Empire: 1991), 54.

¹²¹⁴ D’Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 121 & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 108-9 & 183.

¹²¹⁵ See for example *L’Echo de Paris*, 7 & 13 October 1899 “Ce nom de Joubert est un bon nom français”, going onto list other prominent Jouberts, including 3 French Generals, 1 prelate and Henri III’s doctor.

¹²¹⁶ *Le Matin*, 9 December 1899.

nineteenth century.¹²¹⁷ Most numerous were very recent arrivals, attracted to the Transvaal by the economic opportunities created by diamond and gold mining. Often they installed themselves, permanently or temporarily, directly in these industries. A number worked in spin-off businesses, running shops and hotels or staffing banks. Some of these newer arrivals fought for the Boers, but others were not even necessarily pro-Boer. Enjoying a similar (non) status to Uitlanders of British origin, all had migrated with a view to making as much money for themselves as possible, and it followed from this overriding consideration that some sympathised with British criticisms of Boer backwardness and corrupt, heavily taxing or economically restrictive government.¹²¹⁸ Finally, there were those who were motivated to come to South Africa by the war, without any pretension of being anything other than Frenchmen there to assist the Boers.

Defining those who volunteered and who fought presents further difficulties. Frenchmen who had become naturalised Boers were as obliged to fight for the Republics, on pain of financial and prison penalties, as any other Boer, regardless of whether they had lived in the Republics for a few years or could trace South African ancestors back two centuries. To the consternation of the Quai d'Orsay, there were moves by Transvaal Secretary of State Reitz to coerce non combatant Frenchmen to act as policemen. This might have released more Burghers for purely military duties and therefore jeopardised official French neutrality.¹²¹⁹ Equally, the definition of "policemen" was potentially

¹²¹⁷ For example the Belgian for whom, when encountered on the veldt, the war of 1870 came as news-d'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 126.

¹²¹⁸ Edgar Roels advised the Quai that Kruger's handling of a legislature-judiciary conflict within Transvaal amounted to "une preuve nouvelle du despotisme boer". Gabriel Lemerrier, a French banker in Transvaal 1896-9, returned home to endorse the Uitlanders' claims and complain at the Quai d'Orsay of the losses occasioned to all French investors in a country with a xenophobic rural population "gouverné par une clique des partisans sans scrupules, l'instruction et l'éducation". *MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 1*, letter from Roels to Hanotaux, 19 April 1897, and 28, Delcassé note of interview with Lemerrier, 12 August, and Lemerrier to Delcassé, 20 September 1899,

¹²¹⁹ *MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28*, Aubert to Delcassé, 20 November 1899, enclosing translation of Reitz's 16 November 1899 letter claiming the right to impose obligatory service in the police on neutrals, preceded by Delcassé to Aubert, 6 October 1899, arguing that "l'organisation d'un service de police par des

problematic, given the blurring of lines between all Boer civilians and Boer soldiers, and the fact that one of Transvaal's few uniformed, elite, units was known as the Johannesburg Police.¹²²⁰ The strong reactions that the war provoked across all of continental Europe gave rise to the despatch to South Africa of several ambulances from Holland and Russia, like the one accompanying d'Etchegoyen on the last leg of his sea journey to Lourenço Marques.¹²²¹ These were, ostensibly, humanitarian efforts, but at least one Irish Ambulance Corps, purportedly attached to the Red Cross, went equipped for a full combat role.¹²²² The nature of the war, especially as the Boer armies retreated in March-June 1900 and organised Republican government ceased to exist, further blurred the already unclear civilian/soldier divide. Boers on Commando wore no uniform, and free of any but a shadow of the formal modes of discipline common to European armies could and did do largely as they pleased. Whilst Boers could slip back to their farms when things went badly after March 1900, most foreigners, left to their own devices, divested themselves of volunteer fighter status to seek temporary work in the mines or new police units, either awaiting a favourable opportunity to return to the field like d'Etchegoyen, or else to raise sufficient funds for their own passage home.¹²²³ After June 1900, with shipping lines no longer willing to risk taking would-be volunteers, Monteil and other Boer supporters in Europe were not in a position to send any more.¹²²⁴

étrangers" could be taken as "une atteinte indirecte à la neutralité si elle est assez étendue pour dégager absolument le gouvernement local de ses obligations de police".

¹²²⁰ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 18, Report of French military attaché Demange, 27 August 1900, d'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 58, and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 147 & 163.

¹²²¹ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 7. Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia Boer War* (1981), 196, and Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 255, identified eight foreign ambulances arriving from December 1899 and in action up to May 1900.

¹²²² McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 166, & Lowry, "Wider Impact", Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 220. Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 254, recorded that 46 out of the 53 ambulance members abandoned their Red Cross status in favour of a combat role.

¹²²³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 17, Report of French military attaché Demange, 31 May 1900 and d'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 211.

¹²²⁴ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 240-242.

Why did the Volunteers Go?

At the start of the war, the Transvaal authorities had made it clear that foreigners wishing to serve the Republics had to travel there at their own expense and risk, without repayment from the Boers.¹²²⁵ Those foreigners who were not obliged to fight, or not even in South Africa on the outbreak of war, might choose to come for all kinds of reasons-*The Times History of the War in South Africa* depicted them as a mixture of “enthusiasts, soldiers of fortune and desperados”.¹²²⁶

Economic motives predominated for many Frenchmen in the Boer armies. *Le Siècle* inclined to write off French volunteers in general as “des déclassés, des aigris, des maladies, des aventuriers”.¹²²⁷ This echoed the British line about the foreigners’ ranks including “a very strong contingent of cosmopolitan rascality, gathered together for the opportunities of loot and swindling which war affords,” some later staying in Pretoria to trade horses and outfits.¹²²⁸ Demange, French military attaché to the Boer armies, agreed that some foreign volunteers were no more than “pillards et écumeurs” there to profit through theft or by selling arms and horses.¹²²⁹ The French unit led by Ernest Gallopaud by April 1900 was notoriously undisciplined, its members prone to violence towards each other as well as thefts.¹²³⁰ Even hard core volunteers like d’Etchegoyen had to acknowledge the lure of easy wealth as particularly potent in the vicinity of Rhodes and the mines:

Parmi les assiégants de Kimberley, nous avons, en effet, trouvé toute une bande d’aventuriers que nous ne reverrons nulle part pendant la campagne. De toutes nationalités, un grand nombre même connaissant la ville, pour y avoir travaillé

¹²²⁵ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 10, Giraud (Brussels) to Delcassé, 3 October 1899, relaying Dr Leyds’ advice that volunteers were free “de se rendre en Afrique, mais à leur risques et périls, et à leurs frais”, and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 19 & 160.

¹²²⁶ Amery, *Times History*, vol iii, (1905), 75.

¹²²⁷ *Le Siècle*, 10 November 1899.

¹²²⁸ Amery, *Times History*, vol iii, (1905), 77. Villebois-Mareuil himself was sometimes claimed by the British press to have become involved with the Boers only because he had been paid handsomely to come to South Africa-McNab, *French Colonel*, (1975), 68-69 & 106.

¹²²⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 16, Report of French military attaché Demange, 27 April 1900.

¹²³⁰ McNab, *French Colonel*, (1975), 229-231.

dans les mines, sont venus avec l'espoir de trouver dans le désordre des exploitations brusquement interrompues quelque diamant sans maître.¹²³¹

Echoing d'Etchegoyen's feelings, Villebois-Mareuil condemned French volunteers out only for free meals, "new clothing, equipment, saddlery, horses, etc".¹²³² In sight of perhaps more modest rewards were other French, with the technical abilities needed to crew the six-inch "Long Tom" artillery pieces manufactured by Creusot.¹²³³ Outside Kimberley, "The manipulation of such a gun was beyond the Boers, and it was manned by a detachment of French mercenaries" who escaped with the gun when the town was relieved on 15 February 1900.¹²³⁴

Beyond those who came to South Africa and engaged in war to line their own pockets were some, probably in a minority but of greater interest, whose avowed motive was not of a material nature. As Georges Thiébaud was astute enough to ask, what led men like Villebois-Mareuil - fervently Catholic, schooled for a professional army, and with Royalist leanings - to fight for stolidly protestant Republics defended by a citizen militia?¹²³⁵ Complicating a potentially simple picture presented by the likes of Captain Driant of French patriots disinterestedly spending their money and risking their lives to press the cause of justice against the expansionism of the British Empire, the most well known volunteers came for a variety of reasons, of which dislike of Britain seems to have been only a minor one. Whilst d'Etchegoyen, ostensibly writing his memoir anonymously, remained silent as to any personal motivations he may have had, the timing of Villebois-Mareuil's departure was remarkably convenient from the point of view of his family life and reputation. Widowed five years previously, he had been

¹²³¹ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 71-2. V Rubanov, *From St Petersburg to Pretoria* (1900), cited by Kandyba-Foxcroft, *Russia Boer War* (1981), 232, gives one Russian volunteer's opinion that "As for the Italian and French volunteers, they are just pillaging under the pretext of making reconnoitring trips."

¹²³² McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 157.

¹²³³ Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 283.

¹²³⁴ Brian Gardiner, *The Lion's Cage* (London, Arthur Barker Ltd: 1969), 163 & 181.

¹²³⁵ *Le Gaulois*, 7 April 1900. McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 57, questioned the extent to which Villebois-Mareuil was Royalist by 1899.

repeatedly seen in public with a married woman, Madame de Hochon, so “il voulait quitter la France à un moment où sa vie personnelle devenait compliquée”.¹²³⁶ Whereas Villebois-Mareuil’s death served to absolve his name of any scandal, other volunteers were less fortunate. Participation in the war seems on the part of a certain Le Gall to have served as an avoidance strategy for more than a mere dalliance. Accused of defrauding his employer in 1897 and condemned *in absentio* to 10 years’ imprisonment, he was captured by the British and kept in captivity on St Helena.¹²³⁷ One of eighteen French POWs for repatriation in 1902 on board the *Goorkha* which docked in Britain, rather than face onward transmission to Le Havre courtesy of the French Consul in Southampton, Le Gall absconded, only later to be re-arrested and re-tried in France.¹²³⁸

More generally, the war offered an opportunity for real soldiering that had been conspicuously lacking in the peacetime of metropolitan France for decades. Consequently, the first volunteers that Demange came across in the Boer ranks were “un vingtaine d’officiers français, la plupart démissionnaires, certains en congé”.¹²³⁹ De Bréda, d’Etchegoyen, Gallopaud and Villebois-Mareuil among others answered this description.¹²⁴⁰ For the Colonel, “sa vie militaire, restée inactive depuis quelques années, allait de nouveau retrouver sa plénitude et cette mission lui redonnait un sens”.¹²⁴¹ Part of this motivation stemmed from a too-long stifled love of action. Villebois-Mareuil’s past career had been marked by an unswerving determination to soldier embroidered by an impetuous desire to launch himself into any fight that came along; *Le Figaro* pointed

¹²³⁶ Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 168. Lowry, “Wider Impact”, Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 214, and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 63-4, agree.

¹²³⁷ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Raffrey July 1900 list, naming 9 French POWs sent to St Helena on 20 June 1900.

¹²³⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 45, Gerault to Delcassé, 12 August 1902 & undated press clipping.

¹²³⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 16, Report of French military attaché Demange, 26 March 1900

¹²⁴⁰ Lugan, *Guerre*, (1998), 285.

¹²⁴¹ Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 168.

to the “irrésistable besoin d’action” of this, as McNab put it, “restless spirit”.¹²⁴² The failure of the army to post him to Madagascar to take part in the war of 1895-6 had driven him to resign his commission.¹²⁴³ Previously, posted from 1868 in Cochin China, Villebois-Mareuil had spent several months in 1870 persistently pestering his uncle until the latter agreed to authorise his return to France. Arriving too late for the decisive stage of the Franco-Prussian war, the young Lieutenant earned his status as a Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur by leading a courageous if ultimately futile assault on Germans in Blois after the armistice had come into force.¹²⁴⁴ The Boer War was a chance for otherwise inactive soldiers to practice a *métier* for which they lived. This sentiment is also apparent from the loving detail in which d’Etchegoyen wrote about the guns, equipment, horses and military organisations of both sides in the war.¹²⁴⁵ According to the preface of his *War Notes* “a soldier by faith and vocation”, Colonel Villebois-Mareuil was agreed by the *Times History* to be “Naturally Quixotic, he showed in his life and writings an almost Mediaeval delight in the glory of the soldier’s profession”.¹²⁴⁶

Fighting – for or against a cause?

Part of the volunteers’ popular appeal was that they embodied ideals of justice and patriotism. *Le Radical*’s caricature of “types régressifs” for whom “tuer est le bien suprême”, seeking a fight for the sake of it with anyone, anywhere, was therefore a

¹²⁴² *Le Figaro*, 12 April 1900 & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 50.

¹²⁴³ McNab, *French Colonel*, (1975), 51, Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 152, and Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 350.

¹²⁴⁴ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 27, 31-2 & 224 and Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 137 & 139. The battle was fought on 28 January 1871, the armistice having already been signed at Versailles by Jules Favre, but with word of it not having reached Villebois-Mareuil.

¹²⁴⁵ D’Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 48-50, 55-6, & 154-156.

¹²⁴⁶ Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (London, Adam & Charles Black: 1901. Translated Frederick Lees), vii and Amery, *Times History*, vol iv (1906), 212, quoted by McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 19, McNab, 41, himself echoing this by stressing the importance attached by Villebois-Mareuil to elevated ideas of chivalric behaviour, linked to the profession of soldiering.

misleading one when applied to some of the most prominent volunteers.¹²⁴⁷ More widely, no one in France had volunteered to fight with the Abyssinians against the Italians in 1896 despite French influence and arms reaching the Christian African kingdom, nor is it likely that any would have volunteered to join the Mahdists to fight the British, had that been practicable. The poor organisation if heroic spirit of these primitively armed African powers relative to their European antagonists had not commanded widespread French sympathy whereas those of the outnumbered Boers did. A community of fellow Europeans who were as civilised as any other white group, the Boers were perceived as an agrarian, Christian (if Protestant) nation whose rights and independence were worth preserving and defending against British encroachments.

However, the notion that the volunteers were primarily fighting for the Boers cannot be sustained, especially as the war progressed. As indicated in chapter 6, press coverage in France on Transvaal had included some negative comment about the Boer leadership in general, mostly thanks to the economically restrictive practices and taxes that impacted French commercial activity. Such negative press coverage had, directed against Kruger, continued into the war, particularly in *Le Figaro*. Coverage of the Boer population in general had not, though, suffered from such qualifications. They were, and continued to be, portrayed in an idyllic light, especially on the right, as a rural, prolific and hardy people who loved France.¹²⁴⁸ In their remote, landlocked, Republics the Boers were in fact little known or understood by the French. The mere fact of their being in conflict with Britain generated a highly idealised vision of them within France. Even the relatively dispassionate and intelligent *Matin*, inspired by a photograph of grandfather 65, father 43, and son 15, was not above floating into an ethereal reverie about the members of this army that nothing discourages or intimidates; “le Monde en effet peut

¹²⁴⁷ *Le Radical*, 11 April 1900.

¹²⁴⁸ For example in *Le Soleil*, 4 October 1899.

admirer ses héros...c'est le passé, le présent, et l'avenir qui font le coup de fusil ensemble".¹²⁴⁹

Those French who actually went to spend some time in South Africa took a somewhat less rosy view. For most of the volunteers, their first acquaintanceship with the Boers came with their arrival at Laurenço-Marquès and their train journey to Pretoria for the purposes of the war itself. Villebois-Mareuil was one of the first to arrive. Initially employed as an adviser rather than a field commander, he noted with mounting annoyance that his advice was being ignored, by Joubert outside Ladysmith, and by Kronje outside Kimberley then directly before Kronje's encirclement at Paardeburg on 17 February 1900 and surrender 10 days later.¹²⁵⁰ This disregard did not escape the notice of the French military attaché, noting the lack of position for Villebois-Mareuil, who "circule d'un théâtre d'opérations à un autre, d'un camp au voisin, pour s'aboucher avec les généraux et leur donner des conseils... Ses avis sont presque toujours compris, appréciés, mais rarement suivis", nor the Pretoria Consul who criticised "l'imprévoyance du général Cronje et son obstination de ne pas vouloir écouter les conseils ni suivre les avis de différents militaires étrangers qui se trouvaient avec lui".¹²⁵¹ Villebois-Mareuil's *War Notes* and correspondence to Monteil betrayed mounting discontent at Boer sluggishness and lack of decisive, military spirit.¹²⁵² In d'Etchegoyen's memoir, an increasing element of disillusionment with "ces grands enfants qu'on appelle les Boers" became apparent as his war progressed, for their indolence, slow if stubborn nature, and negligent omission of even the most elementary fortification of key tactical landscape

¹²⁴⁹ *Le Matin*, 7 April 1900. Picture 7.1.

¹²⁵⁰ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 108-9, 121, 129, 140 & 157, and Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 287.

¹²⁵¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 15, Report of French military attaché Demange, 4 March, and Vol 13 Aubert to Delcassé, 23 February 1900.

¹²⁵² For examples, Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 132, 193 & 234, and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 133.

features.¹²⁵³ Like Villebois-Mareuil, he was accustomed to the discipline and structure of a professional European army. Both were clearly pained by the spectacle of a citizen army in which plans were voted on at War Councils, everyone elected the officers, and other ranks retained the option to disobey orders with which they disagreed. Villebois-Mareuil saw in this democratic process a parallel with the French parliamentary system, in both cases a dilatory lack of leadership emerging.¹²⁵⁴ No exception to the general disillusionment with those he had come to help and their “inexorable rule of wait, wait, wait, which makes Europeans chafe with impatience”, the Colonel was increasingly jaded by “his impression of the Boers as he came eventually to see them, stripped of the romantic veil that Europe had thrown about them”.¹²⁵⁵

The Boer leadership had previously pitched for sympathy from Europeans.¹²⁵⁶ Despite this, it was at a loss as to what to do with the volunteer fighting men that this sympathy produced. General Joubert remonstrated to Pretoria that:

Things are being made impossible for me here, mainly by the volunteer Corps of Irish, Russian, Dutch, French, etc. A lot of them are being sent here, unfamiliar with our language and customs, unfamiliar and unsuitable for our way of making war. They are costing the country a lot of money. Some of them get shot dead without any benefit to our cause.¹²⁵⁷

Reitz responded: “The arrival of the people you refer to also causes me a lot of trouble but what can we do? We cannot disown them”.¹²⁵⁸ Once the unifying force of the Colonel had been removed, this became even truer.¹²⁵⁹ The strains of war in early 1900 had already brought home to the volunteers how they were seen by their hosts. Kronje

¹²⁵³ D’Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 48, 65, 105, & 185.

¹²⁵⁴ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 42, 58-9 & 133 and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 118.

¹²⁵⁵ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 220, and McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 82-3, 161 adding that a similar disillusionment had awaited foreign volunteers who went to fight for Greek independence in the 1820s.

¹²⁵⁶ *MAE*, CCPN, T-O, Vol 4, 22 July 1897, Johannesburg Vice Consul, for example, reported a long speech from Transvaal’s secretary of State to the French colony in Johannesburg, citing the French origins of the Boer people, French investments in the mines, and aligning his country with France as a fellow Republic animated by “l’amour de liberté”.

¹²⁵⁷ Telegram Joubert to Kruger, 9 March 1900, quoted by McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 158.

¹²⁵⁸ Telegram Reitz to Joubert, 9 March 1900, quoted by McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 159.

¹²⁵⁹ *MAE*, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Aubert to Delcassé, 23 April 1900, stated “le gouvernement est donc, à vrai dire, fort embarrassé de ces volontaires et ne sait qu’en faire. Il comptait sur le Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil... pour rallier, grouper et diriger utilement tous ces éléments hétérogènes.”

“se contente de répondre aux prévoyants conseils du Colonel du Villebois ‘Lorsque vous étiez enfant, j’étais déjà général’”.¹²⁶⁰ In the direct wake of Villebois-Mareuil’s death, Demange reflected further that:

Le Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil n’a pas eu ici l’influence qu’on lui attribue en Europe... [sur]... les chefs boers, trop méfiants et jaloux de leur autorité... en guise d’un éloge funèbre, on insinue déjà que sa fin doit être celle des tous les étrangers qui veulent se mêler ici de choses militaires dans des conditions complètement en dehors de leur compétence.¹²⁶¹

As the conventional phases of the war drew to a close in May 1900, Botha’s response to German volunteer de Malzan’s attempt to re-form a discrete Volunteer Corps was the widely reported comment “Les Européens peuvent rentrer dans leur pays, je n’ai pas besoin d’eux. Mes Burghers me suffisent”, which d’Etchegoyen took as a poor response to a Legion of 280 that had suffered 15 dead and 87 wounded.¹²⁶² An undercurrent of suppressed hostility was detected in Demange’s observation of himself and his colleagues that “nous sommes des touristes militaires qu’on tolère, non des attachés qu’on accepte et qu’on aide”.¹²⁶³ For him, the “attitude glaciale et gênée” of General Botha personified “la méfiance invétérée des Boers envers les étrangers”.¹²⁶⁴ Perhaps what underlay the attitude to all outsiders (British, French otherwise) of many Boers, especially Joubert and Kruger, was obscurantism and a visceral antipathy rooted in religion, forming a mindset that saw all foreigners as “créatures du diable”.¹²⁶⁵

If the Boers were ungrateful, introverted, ignorant and pious xenophobes lacking many of the martial qualities-discipline, cohesion, aggression, or a willingness to sacrifice

¹²⁶⁰ D’Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 166.

¹²⁶¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 16, Report of French military attaché Demange, 8 April 1900.

¹²⁶² D’Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 200.

¹²⁶³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 16, Report of French military attaché Demange, 4 April 1900.

¹²⁶⁴ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 17, Report of French military attaché Demange, 8 June 1900.

¹²⁶⁵ Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 254. When war loomed, Joubert initially refused the gift of a Russian ambulance, commenting “we Boers don’t hold with these new-fangled ideas; our herbal remedies are good enough” –Deneys Reitz, *Commando* (London, Faber & Faber: 1950), 17. At a more rational level, in the wake of the Jameson Raid MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 5, 29 January 1896, Raffrey to Hanotaux, in response to rumours of a possible German intervention, emphasised Boer resolution to exclude all lasting foreign influence not just British, to remain “les seuls maîtres dans leur pays”.

their own lives if necessary-essential to a successful waging of their war, this might leave open the possibility that the volunteers were primarily fighting against the British in accord with a negative, Anglophobic, agenda. *The Times History of the War in South Africa* interpreted the foreign volunteers as “a constant stream of adventurous spirits to take the field, not for the Boers but against the recognised enemy of their country”, encouraged by “obscene cartoons and hysterical leading articles” in the continental press.¹²⁶⁶ However, a striking point to note is that a hate of all things and persons British, along the lines of a Driant, seems to have been conspicuous for its absence from the writings of the French volunteers, even when published well before the Entente Cordiale was in the air. Villebois-Mareuil’s brother Christian, remaining safely in France and writing in traditional terms of “the English, the hereditary enemy of France,” concluded his letter supporting George’s decision to go by saying “if I didn’t have this blessed gout, I would be tempted to go with you! All my hatred of the English is alive”.¹²⁶⁷ The past history of the Colonel himself suggested little that was explicitly Anglophobe, with Tombs, to the contrary, noting his reputation as an Anglophile who had his clothes made in London.¹²⁶⁸ In Algiers from 1888-91, “Il frequenta la société anglaise avec qui il pouvait converser facilement” and meeting English historian J.E.C. Bodley.¹²⁶⁹ Villebois-Mareuil’s 1892 trip to India resulted, as a sharp contrast to Jules Verne’s opinions, in private and public praise for the British Empire.¹²⁷⁰ Villebois-Mareuil’s final evening in Europe was spent at dinner with his literary peer Bodley and other British visitors to Biarritz.¹²⁷¹

¹²⁶⁶ Amery, *Times History*, vol iii, (1905), 55.

¹²⁶⁷ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 67.

¹²⁶⁸ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 427, CF. Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 105.

¹²⁶⁹ Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 148.

¹²⁷⁰ Villebois-Mareuil, *Entre Civilisés* (189?), McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 45 and Keaney, *Kruger Villebois-Mareuil* (1991), 148-50.

¹²⁷¹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 67-8 & 221.

D'Etchegoyen prefaced his assessment of the British army in South Africa with the comment "Je ne suis pas anglophile et le fait de m'être battu huit mois avec les Boers le prouve suffisamment, mais c'est le devoir d'un soldat loyal de reconnaître les qualités de son adversaire".¹²⁷² He took a graduated approach in his evaluations of the Britons he personally encountered. An instinctive inclination to respect other practitioners of the art of war, even opponents, came out during his transit to South Africa, sharing the ship with a Royal Artillery Captain: "cette prochaine hostilité n'empêche pas nos rapports... d'être des plus cordiaux. Le capitaine porte la médaille du Soudan ce qui rapproche encore nos sympathies".¹²⁷³ So a certain martial admiration crept in ; "Tommy Atkins, le régulier, froid, calme, avancera sous une grêle de projectiles, l'arme au bras, le pas cadencé, comme à la parade. Dédaigneux de danger, la tête haute, il semble dire 'je suis Anglais, je passe'".¹²⁷⁴ Colonial troops shared the characteristics of Boers-good marksmen but with no discipline or cohesion. D'Etchegoyen gave a less flattering opinion of inexperienced yeomen, fed up with the hardships of campaign, all too keen to surrender at the first opportunity, whilst depictions of the British officer generally as an enthusiastic amateur who "ignore tout un officier doit savoir" were gilded by scoffing at senior officers Buller, Methuen and Warren in "un match de démente".¹²⁷⁵ His strongest condemnation was, though, reserved for those who could lay no claim to any mutual soldierly respect, especially:

une bande d'Anglais qui viennent de Rhodesia pour s'engager comme volontaires... Ils envahissent le salon avec ceux qui viennent les accompagner puis chantent 'God Save the Queen'. Un certain nombre de Français répondent par la Marseillaise, la situation se tend, et par antithèse les poings se détendent.¹²⁷⁶

Witnessing Buller's Colenso advance, Villebois-Mareuil agreed on the amateurishness of British officers: "The attack was very brave and methodical, but it was made without

¹²⁷² D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 151.

¹²⁷³ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 7.

¹²⁷⁴ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 148.

¹²⁷⁵ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 149.

¹²⁷⁶ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 36.

the faintest idea of what war is".¹²⁷⁷ Lacking d'Etchegoyen's first hand encounters with Britons in South Africa, he did not make such fine differentiations between British units. Subsequent reflections contradictorily stressed the tenacity of the British, but also dwelt at length on their "army without energy, ideas or tactics", undermined at home "by degrading the military calling to the lowest degree" in a situation of general British decadence fatal to martial spirit and, potentially, empire.¹²⁷⁸ His comments were therefore largely either technical in nature, examining the ability of the British to fight, or else, given the ongoing impact of the Dreyfus case and the discourse of decadence current in France, a reflection as much of his domestic preoccupations as his views on Britain.

If Villebois-Mareuil's "intervention in the Boer-British confrontation in South Africa, though he tried to rationalise it in his will and elsewhere, had no direct connection either with the Boers or the British", then abstract questions of right and wrong might have motivated him and the other volunteers.¹²⁷⁹ He was certainly an idealist, viewed by others as subject to "the attraction of a noble cause" that caused him to "take the cross", the resonance with the crusades being extended to encompass others who had gone to fight for the freedom of Greece and America.¹²⁸⁰ Amongst all of these sweeping abstractions, it might have been easy for the volunteers to lose sight of the implicitly Anglophobic nature of their actions.

How the French impressed foreigners, especially the Boers, mattered greatly to the Colonel, who was therefore embarrassed by misdemeanours on the part of any French

¹²⁷⁷ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 52.

¹²⁷⁸ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 52 & 166-7.

¹²⁷⁹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 19.

¹²⁸⁰ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), vii, x & xi.

civilians or volunteers on the Boer side.¹²⁸¹ This concern points to what was at the centre of the motivation of himself and the other volunteers, namely France itself.¹²⁸² Villebois-Mareuil's departure for South Africa demonstrated "The linkage between foreign military adventure and political crisis at home".¹²⁸³ J.E.C.Bodley's opinion was that Villebois-Mareuil hoped by intervening in the war "to change the political situation in France and advance his own political career there"; a beau geste would serve to release new forces within France.¹²⁸⁴ By early 1899, the scandals rocking the French political establishment left the country "treated with contempt by other nations... thought of as a sort of international sideshow, where the inventions of decadence and cosmopolitan customs witness the end of a nation's genius", according to Villebois-Mareuil who blamed parliament and politicians.¹²⁸⁵ Aware that Marchand, after his return from Fashoda, had been to a large extent muzzled, the Colonel looked for another way to express his views.¹²⁸⁶ Making an appearance in the war, and being seen to participate in it, was a means of demonstrating the worth and vitality of a particular vision of France that was of little relevance to the Boers or British, and had much more to do with the qualities needed to power a French national revival and foster a newly enthused patriotism. D'Etchegoyen recalled the day when:

devant Kimberley, le colonel reçut de France une petite médaille d'or, qu'il me montra avec émotion et fierté. Elle portait ces mots 'A un grand Français, les compagnes de sa fille'. Oui, à un grand Français! Car, en lui vivaient toutes les hautes pensées de devoir, d'abnégation, toutes les nobles vertus qui font un grand chef et un grande patriote. C'était un homme et un soldat!¹²⁸⁷

In Villebois-Mareuil's will, his motivation was explained primarily in terms of a wish for service to his country. In this connection, a two-fold grievance was mooted, not only

¹²⁸¹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 89, 151-2 & 178-9

¹²⁸² Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 427, adds that "People who take extreme positions on faraway issues of which they know little are generally motivated by matters closer to home. So it was with Villebois-Mareuil".

¹²⁸³ Lowry, "Wider Impact", Lowry (ed), *South African War* (2000), 214.

¹²⁸⁴ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 19 & 222, 64 suggesting also a quest for personal fame as a means to these ends.

¹²⁸⁵ Unpublished paper quoted by McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 53.

¹²⁸⁶ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 59.

¹²⁸⁷ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 140.

against Britain but also the Third Republic: “I still think that I have served it in doing my duty as a soldier under a foreign flag against a nation that has done us much harm, conjointly with the baseness of our Governments”.¹²⁸⁸ That said, in the heat of his moment of departure, he revelled most in being “able to do something out of reach of the swine who govern us, and in spite of them, that really whips up the blood!”¹²⁸⁹ The service of the French volunteers in South Africa, and Villebois-Mareuil’s death, were intended as conduct of national redemption focussed on France, not the Boers or British. From the foreword of the Colonel’s *War Notes*, they were clearly understood as such at the time by sympathisers to the volunteers:

He had but one object in view, one perennial thought which appears many times between the lines of his diary. This thought was no longer for the Boers but for France and her army. He had sworn to leave in the depths of Africa an imperishable recollection of French bravery: he had resolved to show all-friends or foes-how the soldiers of his nation could die. He kept his resolution at Boshof.¹²⁹⁰

Reactions; The Paris Press and Villebois-Mareuil’s Death, April 1900.

Whatever the complexities of the motives of each individual volunteer, thousands of miles away and therefore accordingly remote from the realities of the war Metropolitan France was free to interpret the volunteers’ actions in accordance with its own domestic agenda. Coverage of the volunteers, constrained in 1899 given the secrecy surrounding the initial departures, increased in early 1900, perhaps reaching its zenith in the aftermath of Colonel Villebois-Mareuil’s death near the town of Boshof, at the hands of a detachment of Yeomen commanded by Lord Methuen, on Friday 6 April 1900. Subscriptions for the fallen Colonel at once sprang into life. Memorial services were organised in Paris for Wednesday 18 April at St Nicolas le Champs at 12pm, and at 10am by the Comité de la Patrie Française packing Notre Dame with a congregation of

¹²⁸⁸ Quoted in McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 220.

¹²⁸⁹ Letter from Georges Villebois-Mareuil to Christian Villebois-Mareuil, 23 October 1899, quoted in McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 69.

¹²⁹⁰ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), xvii.

some 10,000.¹²⁹¹ This service, addressed by François Coppée, brought under one roof not only senior officers involved in the Dreyfus case but Colonel Monteil, *Le Gaulois* journalists Arthur Meyer and Georges Thiébaud, officers from the Marchand expedition Lieutenant Dyé and Captain Baratier, and Captain Driant, the latter two of whom left the scene together.¹²⁹² Driant subsequently worked into his *Guerre Fatale* the theme of revenge for Villebois-Mareuil, over whose grave Kruger pays homage in proclaiming the new South African republic rendered possible by Britain's defeats, but the immediate impact of the death was more complex than this simple Anglophobic narrative suggested.¹²⁹³

News of the death reached France via Havas late on Friday 6 April.¹²⁹⁴ A small element of doubt as to the facts persisted, pending confirmation from the Boers and of Robert's telegram, but for practical purposes the first reactions of the press appeared on Saturday 7 April. On the Nationalist right, sentiments were predictable: *L'Echo de Paris* saw Villebois-Mareuil's South African adventure as intended "éveiller brusquement ce pays de sa torpeur et le mettre debout d'un sursaut... Il suivait toujours son idée d'une régénération de la France par l'action individuelle".¹²⁹⁵ This paper at once started a subscription to pay for a religious service and *La Liberté* (publisher of Villebois-Mareuil's letters from South Africa) started another to finance "un monument funéraire".¹²⁹⁶ Others confined themselves to generous words, *La Libre Parole* headlining "La Mort Héroïque du Colonel du Villebois-Mareuil" and interpreting the enrolment of this "victime de sa généreuse ardeur" as "un acte français par

¹²⁹¹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 227-228 & Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 300.

¹²⁹² *Le Matin*, *Le Gaulois* and *Le Figaro*, 19 April 1900.

¹²⁹³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 86-87 & Cornick, "Representations", *French Cultural Studies* Vol 17.2 (2006), 149.

¹²⁹⁴ *Le Figaro*, 7 April, Constant Collonnier, *Le Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil* (Paris, Tolra et M Simonet: 1901), 58, & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 214.

¹²⁹⁵ *L'Echo de Paris*, 10 April.

¹²⁹⁶ *Le Gaulois* and *Le Matin*, 8 April.

excellence”.¹²⁹⁷ This identification of the Colonel with a true and more noble France that transcended the day-to-day politics of the Third Republic was pushed further by *L’Intransigeant*. In a personal attack on Delcassé, Rochefort, drawing a comparison between “Père Delcassé, en sa qualité d’huissier” expelling tenants and Kruger expelling foreigners from Transvaal, went on to comment that the French now “s’obstinent à élever des monuments aux Villebois-Mareuil et à jeter des pommes cuites aux Delcassé”.¹²⁹⁸ Exceptionally bitter polemics, even by this paper’s standards, soon followed, not so much implying a governmental apathy towards the Boer War as an implicit identification of ministers with the British cause. Having vilified Yves Guyot and Jules Reinach, at the mercy of British shareholders in *Le Siècle*, “bien obligé... de cracher sur le cadavre de Villebois-Mareuil tombé sur des balles anglaises”, Rochefort went on to argue that what they wrote was also dictated by Waldeck Rousseau, Millerand and, above all, Delcassé.¹²⁹⁹

Re-affirming the shift towards a sharper, nationalist-right attitude since its autumn 1898 coverage of Fashoda, *Le Gaulois*’ initial reaction to Villebois-Mareuil’s death was along similar lines to that of the avowedly nationalist *Intransigeant*. On 7 April 1900 answering his own question as to why the Colonel had been involved in the South African war, Georges Thiébaud’s editorial placed him in opposition to Delcassé “le ministre mal élevé” for whom news of the death would be “un soufflet d’outre tombe”. Absorption of the death into the discourses of French internal politics was immediate, in light of Delcassé’s previous criticism of the “tartuffes de patriotisme”. Explicitly reflecting “Dreyfus libre et Déroulède en exil, voilà un enseignement”, Thiébaud countered domestic critics of Villebois-Mareuil’s actions:

¹²⁹⁷ *La Libre Parole*, 7 April.

¹²⁹⁸ *L’Intransigeant*, 8 April.

¹²⁹⁹ *L’Intransigeant*, 10 April.

Quelques sceptiques diront peut-être que rien n’obligeait le colonel de Villebois-Mareuil à quitter son pays pour aller combattre au Transvaal mais la morale trop pratique de ces âmes desséchées par la culte de deux et deux font quatre ne triompera pas, dans la circonstance, du sentiment autrement empoignant qui étreint les âmes façonnées de l’autre sorte.¹³⁰⁰

As well as imputing to those critics a quality normally associated with Englishness (being practical and prosaic), this presaged an essentially romanticised view of Villebois-Mareuil, for “Le Colonel était la modestie, comme il était tout ensemble le courage et la délicatesse”, combining tact with a noble determination to fight for what was right. To *Le Gaulois*, it was clear that he was “un exemple moralisateur” in more than one sense. Thiébaud went on to align France’s self-image with the cause of justice for which the colonel was perceived to stand, suggesting a groundswell of public sentiment favouring an international mission, perhaps peculiar to France, that a transitory government might mask, but could not hope to eradicate:

Cette glorieuse mort... n’aura pas été inutile. Elle dégage la vrai France de l’attitude inexplicable que son gouvernement lui a fait prendre... La vrai France n’a pas cessé d’être le champion de la justice outragée, le champion des faibles en proie aux agressions.¹³⁰¹

Themes of shameful, betraying, “odieux parlementaires” in opposition to “la magnanimité, génie de notre pays”, as embodied by the colonel, were replayed by François Coppée 2 days later, and a week after that it was the turn of Gaston Jollivet to ask *Le Gaulois* readers “Qui vengera Villebois?”, as there had been “silence dans les rangs”, so far.¹³⁰²

True to its governmental links, *Le Matin* attempted a detached tone by comparison. Its initial reaction intermixed ideas of abstract right and wrong with ones of national pride;

Tombé au champ d’honneur... sa mort est une perte pour les Boers. C’est aussi une gloire pour sa famille et pour notre pays. Le sang généreux d’un officier

¹³⁰⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 7 April.

¹³⁰¹ *Le Gaulois*, 7 April.

¹³⁰² *Le Gaulois*, 9 & 17 April.

français sera fécond pour la triomphe de la liberté et du droit. L'exemple de ses talents et de son héroïsme rehausse le renom de notre armée.¹³⁰³

Emphasis was laid on both the aristocratic origins of the Colonel and the disinterested nature of his actions, in the footsteps of a family “toujours distingué, sans s'enricher, au service des rois de France, et de la France”.¹³⁰⁴ The next day, in the absence of any further news on Villebois-Mareuil, having seen a favourable report on the Basuto tribe at risk from Boer encroachments, it was not until 11 April that *Le Matin* passed on praise of the French officer from *The Times*, and 14 April that *La Liberté*'s comments about the Colonel having “une endurance et une vaillance toute française” were repeated.¹³⁰⁵ Publication of a factual, and relatively brief, report on the memorial services for Villebois-Mareuil could not be avoided on Thursday 19 April. Despite the first report suggesting themes of redemptive nationalism, the central aim of *Le Matin* seems to have been to minimise as far as practicable publicity for the volunteers, a helpful approach if unnecessary embarrassment to the French government's policy of neutrality were to be avoided.

Initial reactions on the radical left were reserved, if for different reasons, having to balance Villebois-Mareuil's evident popularity with disdain for the well known politics of the Colonel, and his brother “un des plus ardents défenseurs de la réaction”. Affecting even handed generosity, *Le Rappel*'s avowed opposition to the pair “ne nous empêche pas de déplorer profondément sa mort et de se rendre à son courage un hommage mérité car, à l'inverse de ceux qui, demain, vont essayer de manifester sur son nom, nous savons être justes, même envers des adversaires”.¹³⁰⁶ Injecting a personal element into the animosity, Urban Gohier of *L'Aurore*, acknowledging “une certaine estime” for the colonel, felt obliged to “rend hommage à sa mémoire, d'autant plus volontiers qu'il avait

¹³⁰³ *Le Matin*, 7 April.

¹³⁰⁴ *Le Matin*, 7 April.

¹³⁰⁵ *Le Matin*, 8, 11 & 14 April.

¹³⁰⁶ *Le Rappel*, 7 April.

jugé à propos, il y a quelques mois, de me lâcher une bordée d'injures puériles, d'une façon bien militaire".¹³⁰⁷ Such praise through gritted teeth was not for *Le Radical*, which felt at liberty to be far bolder. After giving a short, bland, biographical note on Villebois-Mareuil, this subsequently published overt criticism of the colonel's service with the Boers:

Nous estimons grandement l'officier qui froidement, résolument attend l'heure où l'agression étrangère forcera son intervention, et qui lutte héroïquement pour ce qu'il sait être un droit de légitime défense... je dis que M.de Villebois-Mareuil, en quittant son poste dans l'armée française et en allant se faire casser la tête sur la crête d'un kopje, a manqué à son premier devoir, qui était de consacrer son énergie et sa vaillance à son pays.¹³⁰⁸

The Socialist paper *Le Peuple* said of Villebois-Mareuil that "Il a mis ses actes en accord avec son langage. De toute la bande nationaliste, il a été le seul qui voulut manger de l'Anglais autrement que par métaphores".¹³⁰⁹ By giving him credit for at least having had the courage to back his words with actions, the paper achieved the twin goals of honouring a dead hero, but casting upon the nationalist constituency from which he came the slur of being too lazy, cowardly or insincere to dare to do as he had.

Dreyfus Intervenes.

What drastically altered this state of affairs on the left was the conservative *Figaro*. There had been little distinctive about that paper's initial reporting of Villebois-Mareuil's demise. Quoting Methuen's despatch, Jules Cadorne's otherwise prosaic opening report that "Un lamentable épisode de la guerre sud-africaine vient de plonger dans le deuil une famille française" concentrated on how the Colonel's mother and daughter had chanced to hear about the death from news criers.¹³¹⁰ Moving on from this "human interest" angle on the story, on 8 April continuing doubts as to the fact of his death on the parts of J.Cornély and Cadorne were mixed with Villebois-Mareuil's praise for the Boers. Hardly less uncontroversial were the words on the Colonel himself "Chez

¹³⁰⁷ *L'Aurore*, 10 April.

¹³⁰⁸ *Le Radical*, 8 & 11 April.

¹³⁰⁹ Quoted in Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 299.

¹³¹⁰ *Le Figaro*, 7 April.

lui, l'écrivain et le penseur étaient doublés d'un homme d'action", a man of principle in contrast to the British.¹³¹¹ However, anti-nationalist undertones were already apparent, and on 11 April *Le Figaro* sniped at the publicity-seeking Ligue de la Patrie Française, in organising the Notre Dame memorial, for disrespecting the provision in Villebois-Mareuil's will for there to be no religious service on his death.¹³¹²

This was a preliminary to an all-out attack on 12 April, on politicians using the Colonel's corpse for their own ends, "exploiter sa fin héroïque et son exemple glorieux au profit de leurs haines". But this was not just another polemic, for *Le Figaro* had correspondence written by the Colonel himself furnished by "un ami", referring to his discontent with those leading the army, their decision not to post him to the 1895 Madagascar campaign, and for no longer respecting the confidentiality of military archives now misused to discredit Zola. Most explosive of all, contrary to what might have been expected from his lionisation by the nationalist, anti Dreyfusard, press, a letter dated 13 September 1899 from Biarritz suggested that Villebois-Mareuil believed in Dreyfus' innocence and favoured a revision of the case:

Après Henry par Cavaignac, voilà du Paty par Zurlinden, sans plus d'explication, du reste. Et l'on croit donner satisfaction au sentiment public ainsi surexcité! Je suis épouvanté de l'illogisme tant de Cavaignac que de Zurlinden comme ministres de guerre. Ils n'ont rien à voir à la revision... pourquoi la refuser?... J'accepte en principe la révision s'il m'est prouvé qu'elle ne recole aucun casus belli.¹³¹³

From the material extensively quoted, the only proviso was that the false evidence should not put weapons into anyone's hands. On 13 April, *Le Figaro* published a response from the Colonel's brother, drawing attention to the confidential nature of the comments on the French army, and asserting that Villebois-Mareuil had approved "complètement et résolument l'attitude des témoins militaires et les arrêts rendus par ses

¹³¹¹ *Le Figaro*, 8 April.

¹³¹² *Le Figaro*, 11 April.

¹³¹³ *Le Figaro*, 12 April.

camarades des conseils de guerre de Paris et de Rennes”.¹³¹⁴ Beyond the comment that the very privacy of the correspondence was what lent it greater credibility, *Le Figaro* for now dropped out of the debate that it had precipitated.

The left was afforded the opportunity to claim this soldier, of whose integrity and heroism the right had not ceased to sing, as a sympathiser if not one of their own. Battle ensued for the possession of the memory of Villebois-Mareuil.¹³¹⁵ In response to *La Liberté*’s subscription, the left would now argue that “il s’agirait d’une souscription nationale et non d’une souscription nationaliste”. Ranc’s editorial in *Le Radical* led the way with a direct attack on assertions from François Coppée, of *la Patrie Française*, that “le colonel Villebois-Mareuil était des nôtres; il est à nous, il nous appartient”. Displaying a somewhat different tone towards Villebois-Mareuil’s character and sense of duty than it had a mere three days earlier, *Le Radical* went on to crow:

L’officier mort en combattant pour la juste cause des Boërs, celui dont les nationalistes veulent accaparer la mémoire, dont ils exploitent cyniquement la fin glorieuse, dont ils volent le nom pour faire à leur faction un réclame bruyante, cet homme de grand Coeur et de grande âme, était revisionniste !¹³¹⁶

Many of those at the heart of the Comité français des républiques sud-africaines, such as Jules Lemaître, François Coppée, Edouard Drumont and Henri de Rochefort, were avowed anti-Dreyfusards, so the ensuing controversy was unsurprising.¹³¹⁷ *Le Gaulois*, which had already defined those antipathetic towards the Colonel primarily in terms of internal politics, was not slow in responding to the letters.¹³¹⁸ Questioning where any such politicians using Villebois-Mareuil were, Desmoulin repeated that the

¹³¹⁴ *Le Figaro*, 13 April. McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 61-62, stated that in September 1899 Villebois-Mareuil’s actual attitude was similar to that of Maurras, that “Dreyfus’ personal destiny was secondary to the interests of the army’s reputation”, whereas at 89 & 91-93 McNab stressed his later admiration for French Jewish Captain Sam Léon, servicing the Boer artillery in South Africa.

¹³¹⁵ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 238-239.

¹³¹⁶ *Le Radical*, 14 April.

¹³¹⁷ Prochasson, “An English Crisis?”, Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 265-266, and Serodes, *Anglophobie* (2010), 101.

¹³¹⁸ *Le Gaulois*, 8 April, seeking to marginalise the “deux ou trois journaux dreyfusards irréductibles” who were not sharing in Paris’ reactions of accentuated mourning.

correspondence had been private. Furthermore, *Le Figaro* had interpreted the letter “de la plus singulière façon”, so that “Il lui prête des opinions qui ne furent jamais les siennes, des sentiments qu’en toutes circonstances il condamnait hautement”.¹³¹⁹ Further attacks on those critical of Villebois-Mareuil’s decision to fight in South Africa were published on the day of the memorial services, with a later plea for those outside Notre Dame after the service, whom “la police charge avec fureur bien inutile, puisque les manifestants ne se livrent à aucun acte blâmable”. This police action was prompted by acclamations for General Mercier - the former Minister of War who had urged on the cover up of the false evidence in the Dreyfus case - with Desmoulins claiming Generals in uniform among those attacked in “ce spectacle ridicule et honteux”.¹³²⁰

Covering the same disorder, *Le Figaro*, criticising the “patriotes plus exaltés que réfléchis” and, again, with the Ligue de la Patrie Française behind them, wondered whether the Colonel would have approved hitting a policeman with a lead tipped cane as the best way to honour the army. Of the Ligue followers, Cornély wrote : “Ils ont transformé le service funèbre célébré à Notre Dame en une apothéose de l’honorable général Mercier, pour lequel le Colonel défunt professait plutôt de l’antipathie”.¹³²¹ More succinctly, *Le Radical*, remarking on the cries of ‘Vive la police’ from the demonstrators before the charge, was amused to note “la logique n’est pas ce qui gêne nos bons patriotes”, also echoing the *Figaro*’s emphasis not so much on Villebois-Mareuil’s actions in South Africa as Mercier and the Dreyfus case.¹³²²

From this short survey, it is apparent that initial reactions to the Colonel’s death ran along predictable lines for the nationalist right, the conservative right, and the left. The

¹³¹⁹ *Le Gaulois*, 13 April.

¹³²⁰ *Le Gaulois*, 18 & 19 April.

¹³²¹ *Le Figaro*, 19 April.

¹³²² *Le Radical*, 20 April.

disclosure of Villebois-Mareuil's correspondence one week after his death, showing his political views in a new light, both re-energised the press coverage on him and placed him in the centre of the ongoing political divides within France. Rather than focus on his army career or his actions in South Africa, which were relatively uncontroversial, the press took the most important aspect of the disclosure as his attitude towards Dreyfus, thus re-affirming the importance of Villebois-Mareuil's life and death in French internal politics.

Reactions; The Quai d'Orsay Walks the Tightrope of Neutrality.

In view of the attitudes towards the Boer War of the Quai d'Orsay discussed in chapter 4, the spectacle of French citizens going off to fight for the Boers, then being killed, wounded or captured by the British, could hardly be anything but an embarrassment to the French government. Paul Cambon, in London, was the most explicit on this point, listing "des bureaux d'enrôlement" in Paris' Latin quarter, together with pro-Boer demonstrations and town council resolutions, as things that the French would do well to abstain from if they did not want "des procédés vexatoires" from Britain once the war was concluded.¹³²³ Worried that the example of Villebois-Mareuil would in the eyes of French opinion and the British press eclipse Delcassé's work, he went on to write privately to his brother that :

Les manifestations auxquelles on se livre en France à l'occasion de la mort du Colonel Villebois-Mareuil sont excessives, c'est encore une explosion d'anglophobie... Nous justifions la calomnie de la presse anglaise qui soutenait que l'armée boer était menée par des officiers français. A part Villebois-Mareuil, il n'y avait pas d'officiers à nous là-bas et en revanche il y avait beaucoup d'Allemands; Mais nous sommes si détraqués que nous ne pouvons nous tenir. La statue de Villebois-Mareuil servira à protester contre l'affichage du discours de Delcassé.¹³²⁴

In Paris, the question of the volunteers was potentially one of more conflicting impulses for the Quai d'Orsay. In essence, Delcassé had to attempt some semblance of sympathy

¹³²³ MAE, CCPN, Grande Bretagne Politique Etrangère Relations avec la France, Vol 12, Paul Cambon to Delcassé, 11 November 1899.

¹³²⁴ P.Cambon, *Correspondance* tome 2, (1940), 46, P.Cambon to Jules Cambon, 8 April 1900.

for the tide of public opinion, which the volunteers represented, whilst not actually doing or saying anything to antagonise Britain.

Part of the solution to the problems created by the French volunteers might have been simply to denaturalise them. On the advice of Louis Renault, by the very act of taking up arms in a foreign army the volunteers would cease to be subject to the Civil Code, without even the need for an official declaration to this effect.¹³²⁵ Effectively disowning the volunteers was, however, a risky business. Neither French pro-Boer nationalists eager to embrace such men as representatives of a true French nation, nor the British authorities, were likely to be much interested in such legal niceties when and if Frenchmen were killed or captured during the war. If anything, in the eyes of some nationalists, a visible distance between the Republican politicians and the volunteers might have enhanced the credibility of the latter.

So for the most part during the war the Quai d'Orsay did what it could quietly to ignore the volunteers. Invited by the Consul in Johannesburg to define what attitude to take towards the formation of "un corps de volontaires français" directly prior to the outbreak of hostilities, Delcassé replied that, whilst they could not stop French nationals from volunteering, they should certainly not encourage any to do so, or intervene when such volunteers found themselves exposed or captured by the British.¹³²⁶ In fact, the foreign minister aimed to prevent would be volunteers from ever reaching South Africa. A report from Laurenço-Marquès, on the difficulty of getting authority for people to cross the border into Transvaal, served as excuse to telegram the Prefect in Marseilles an order

¹³²⁵ *MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Louis Renault note, 17 October 1899.*

¹³²⁶ *MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Colomiès (Johannesburg) to Delcassé 29 September, and Delcassé to Colomiès 1 October 1899.*

to stop any further French from boarding ships bound for that port.¹³²⁷ Similar efforts were made to prevent the recruitment of anyone in Tunisia into British ranks.¹³²⁸

Some doubt persists as to how meaningful were these efforts to dissuade French nationals from going to help the Boers. McNab sees the Prefect's actions as "little more than a formality, a useful reference for the Quai d'Orsay to have on file to show the British ambassador".¹³²⁹ Conversely, Lugan argued that "les autorités françaises faisaient en effet tout ce qui était en leur pouvoir pour les dissuader de poursuivre leur voyage" and traced substantial successes on the part of French consuls in Portugal and Mozambique in stopping would-be volunteers from continuing to their destination.¹³³⁰ That these activities were genuine would tend to be supported by the lack of any effort made to confine them behind the scenes. The French press reported the boarding of the ship *Yangtse*, bound for Madagascar, by the Marseilles Prefect's commissioner, there to tell travellers of the difficulty of obtaining Portuguese permission to pass from Mozambique to Transvaal. However, demonstrating to the British that a complete stoppage was impossible, it was also reported that 25 "sous officiers à bord, envoyé par le comité de Paris pour servir dans l'armée des boers, ont tous passé outre à cet avis, et ont demandé à effectuer quand même leur départ".¹³³¹

Later on, in London and South Africa *The Times* and *Cape Argus* carried the story that Delcassé had confided to Leyds on 9 October 1899 that "Le Transvaal pouvait compter sur l'assistance morale et matérielle de la France", offering active assistance in the form of a free use of French diplomatic ciphers and the presentation of Villebois-Mareuil and

¹³²⁷ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Amyot (Laurenço-Marquès) to Delcassé, and Delcassé to Prefect, both 24 January 1900. According to Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 269, the Italian authorities likewise discouraged their nationals from travelling to South Africa to fight.

¹³²⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Millet (Tunis) to Delcassé, 10 November 1899.

¹³²⁹ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 225.

¹³³⁰ Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 280.

¹³³¹ *Le Matin & Le Gaulois*, 26 January, *Le Radical*, 27 January 1900.

other French officers to serve in the Boer ranks.¹³³² This elicited an immediate telegram from Delcassé to Paul Cambon, denying any such connection, or that he had ever met Leyds save in the presence of Kruger during his recent visit to France.¹³³³ Both Raffray and Cambon therefore refuted these reports, Cambon being at pains to stress the lack of importance attached to them at the British Foreign Office by Sir Thomas Sanderson.¹³³⁴ Although these denials were primarily for British ears, the lack of support for the volunteers could not be wholly concealed in France, and came to form one part of the wider right wing critique of Delcassé and French foreign policy.

The government's position seems to have been eased to an extent by British attitudes towards the volunteers. There was some suggestion of popular hostility in South Africa itself-“J’ai entendu des Anglais, ordinairement calmes et pondérés, user d’un langage comminatoire pour les puissances et notamment pour la France, à laquelle on ne pardonne pas les canons de Creusot et les quelques officiers qui sont dans les rangs des boers”.¹³³⁵ However, this seems to have been eclipsed by the generous response to the encounter at Boshof. Contrary their expectations, those foreigners taken prisoner were not shot out of hand.¹³³⁶ On the orders of Lord Roberts, Methuen buried Villebois-Mareuil with military honours in the presence of surviving French volunteers, including de Bréda who read a funeral address.¹³³⁷ Smith-Dorrien later recalled that when news “that we had captured several Boers, and killed their leader Villebois” had reached him, word had had it that “from all accounts [he] was a fine soldier and a good fellow”.¹³³⁸ After the initial, brief, telegram advising of the death, Methuen did not shy from praise

¹³³² MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Raffray to Delcassé, 29 December, citing 27 December *Cape Argus*, and Vol 30, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 17 December, citing *The Times* 6 & 10 December.

¹³³³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, Delcassé to P.Cambon, 7 December.

¹³³⁴ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 26, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 10 December.

¹³³⁵ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 14, Raffray to Delcassé, 7 March.

¹³³⁶ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 208. They were shipped off to the POW camp in St Helena in mid April 1900- *Le Figaro*, 15 April 1900 and Lugan, *Guerre* (1998), 299.

¹³³⁷ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 211-212.

¹³³⁸ Smith-Dorrien, *Forty-Eight Years* (1925), 180.

of “an accomplished and gallant soldier [who] preferred death to becoming a prisoner” in a personal letter to Villebois-Mareuil’s daughter subsequently published in the Paris press.¹³³⁹ Methuen personally paid for Villebois-Mareuil’s tombstone, whilst Monson visited the Colonel’s home to leave his calling card as a mark of respect.¹³⁴⁰ The French press went on to reproduce praise from their London peers for the Colonel, with Conan Doyle publishing his not wholly uncomplimentary view of “the gallant Frenchman, who appears to have had the ambition of playing Lafayette in South Africa”, before the year was over.¹³⁴¹

The French government’s own response to the Colonel’s death was marked by an initial lack of any official expressions of sympathy to his relatives, but “growing misgivings” at the numerous moves to perpetuate his memory by way of renamed streets and subscriptions towards public memorials.¹³⁴² Cardinal Richard having offered Notre Dame for a memorial service, the government’s hand was forced by a parliamentary interpellation on 11 April requesting permission for army officers in uniform to attend that service. That Lasies’ interpellation was couched in terms of French soldiers in essence saluting a heroic death to which the British army had already paid tribute pointed to the understanding that the potential importance of this event lay not in Anglo-French relations but rather within French domestic politics. The understanding was mutual, to judge by the careful response of Gallifet, Minister of War, who, giving permission, sought to impose conditions; “It is not a question of politics. The officers... will not be mixed up in any demonstration that may arise”.¹³⁴³ Government

¹³³⁹ *Le Figaro*, 13 April 1900 & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 218-9.

¹³⁴⁰ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 218 & 217.

¹³⁴¹ Conan Doyle, *Great Boer War* (1900), 386.

¹³⁴² McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 222.

¹³⁴³ Speech to the Chamber, quoted by McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 224. Accounts differ as to whether such officers did become involved in the demonstrations after the Notre Dame service- Desmoulins in *Le Gaulois* 19 April reported that they did, whereas Davenay’s *Le Figaro* 19 April report maintained that they studiously avoided any participation and quickly departed the scene.

representatives were seen to pay their respects by attending the St Nicolas le Champs service, but avoided rubbing shoulders with General Mercier or François Coppée, or getting mixed up in the demonstrations that did arise. That government motivation was not so much to avoid antagonising Britain as to prevent Villebois-Mareuil's memory focussing nationalist, anti-Republican opposition forces was also perceived across the Channel. In a lengthy despatch, *The Times* explained to its readers that Ligue members and ex-supporters of Boulanger, rallied by the Dreyfus case, were "on the lookout for the famous *homme sauveur*" which the French state was determined to deny them, hence the government's attitude towards commemoration of Villebois-Mareuil.¹³⁴⁴

Of those French volunteers captured, some were simply sent home. D'Etchegoyen's career as a volunteer ended on 5 July 1900 when his detachment was surrounded by 300 cavalry, remarking "Je suis remis entre les mains d'officiers anglais auprès desquels je trouve l'accueil le plus courtois qu'il soit possible de rêver".¹³⁴⁵ Thereafter, he was set at liberty, on parole, and departed within two weeks for France to write his memoir.¹³⁴⁶ The French government registered, but did not intervene to secure the freedom of others captured, who were shipped off with Boer POWs, in numbers of about 40.¹³⁴⁷ By the end of the war, in addition to the 18 in St Helena (including de Bréda and the other Boshof survivors) there were 16 at Ceylon.¹³⁴⁸ Shortly after the war's end, the welcome likely to await returning POW volunteers in France could even represent a source of banter between an Under Secretary at the British Foreign Office and the French Chargé d'Affaires.¹³⁴⁹ Britain had, during the war, happily paid the fares to enable French

¹³⁴⁴ *The Times*, 9 April 1900.

¹³⁴⁵ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 237.

¹³⁴⁶ D'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 251 & 258.

¹³⁴⁷ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 27, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 7 May 1901.

¹³⁴⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 45, Undated dossier on Repatriement on St Hélène and Calcutta Consul to Delcassé, 4 June 1902, on Ceylon.

¹³⁴⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 23, Geoffray (London) to Delcassé, 20 August 1902, stating "Chez l'un des Sous-Secrétaires d'état pour l'entretenir du repatriement de français prisonniers à St Helena, il me dit sous

nationals in South Africa to be repatriated, in some cases just free passage to the coast, for others all the way back to France, despite some of them having previously carried arms against the British.¹³⁵⁰ This offer was not extended to French volunteer fighters still in British hands at the end of the war. Squabbles between the Foreign Office and Quai d'Orsay ensued over responsibility for the costs of repatriation, as well as the exact routes to be taken by the British ships and their timing, not assisted by some of the volunteers themselves-like Le Gall-who had good reason not to want to be repatriated at all. The POWs had long been released by the time the wrangling had concluded in April-May 1903, with a final supplemental bill for £415 from Lansdowne being discharged by Paul Cambon's office in London.¹³⁵¹

The approaches of the French Consuls in South Africa, as might be expected in light of their previously discussed wider attitudes toward the war, were somewhat different from those of Delcassé or Cambon. The first consul with whom incoming French volunteers had to deal was in Laurenço-Marquês, Amyot, who helped get d'Etchegoyen into Transvaal, even while telling Delcassé of the difficulties being experienced by the many French arrivals in securing Portuguese authorisation to disembark from their ship, or cross the border.¹³⁵² However, the more important figure was Aubert, who had greater opportunity, as well as the motivation, to offer assistance. On the one hand, he presented a picture of absolute propriety to Paris, insisting that there was not "Une atteinte, même indirecte, à la neutralité," from Transvaal's French residents:

forme de plaisanterie 'Quel accueil vous allez faire en France lorsqu'ils rentreront'", a welcome which Geoffray compared with "celui que vous allez faire aux généraux Boërs quand ils seront en Angleterre".

¹³⁵⁰ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 17, Aubert to Delcassé, 26 August 1900 and Vol 18, Raffray to Delcassé, 26 November 1900, recording the expulsion of 5 French citizens from Johannesburg to Cape Town.

¹³⁵¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 45, Undated dossier on Repatriement and Calcutta Consul to Delcassé, 4 June 1902.

¹³⁵² d'Etchegoyen, *Dix Mois* (1901), 39. According to MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Portuguese Legation to Delcassé, 18 March 1900, the passage of volunteers though Mozambique had become problematic for the colonial authorities, who seem to have feared that, left unchecked, it might push Britain into demanding possession of Laurenço Marques.

L'attitude des français est des plus correctes. Ils n'ont pas organisé de corps de volontaires comme les allemands, les hollandais et les américains et ne sont pas enrôlés dans les troupes boers. Ceux qui ne sont pas employés activement dans les mines se sont joints, avec d'autres étrangers, à la police locale, non seulement pour la garde de leurs biens et propriétés mais aussi pour la protection des biens des anglais qui, pris de panique, ont fui le pays.¹³⁵³

On the other, Aubert was less than five weeks later sparing no effort to help Villebois-Mareuil. On arrival at Pretoria station finding Aubert on the platform, on Saturday 25 November 1899, the Colonel "received the warmest welcome from him and Mlle Aubert, who is thoroughly French like her father, speaks Dutch as he does and puts her energy and devotion into everything that may benefit France".¹³⁵⁴ Then on Sunday 26 November "but for the friendliness of M.Aubert, the French Consul, and his family, who took possession of me from ten in the morning until ten at night, I should have had nothing to do".¹³⁵⁵ In a further departure from any pretence at neutrality, Aubert appraised the Colonel as to the progress of the war over a Sunday lunch shared with Irish nationalist Michael Davitt and openly advised him as to how best-in contrast to the less tactful approach of German officers already attached to Boer forces-he might go about dispensing advice.¹³⁵⁶ It was also Aubert who arranged the meeting between Villebois-Mareuil and Reitz on Monday 27 November. Following an excursion to Johannesburg, Villebois-Mareuil met Aubert and Reitz socially for lunch on 2 December 1899, before going to meet Kruger, then on to the front.¹³⁵⁷

Delcassé had expressly instructed Aubert "Si les hostilités éclatent, vous aurez à remplir consciemment les devoirs de la neutralité".¹³⁵⁸ It is perhaps unsurprising that Aubert's reports neglected to mention the hospitality he had extended to Villebois-Mareuil, still

¹³⁵³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Aubert to Delcassé, 22 October 1899.

¹³⁵⁴ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 7-8.

¹³⁵⁵ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 7.

¹³⁵⁶ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 8 & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 85.

¹³⁵⁷ Villebois-Mareuil, *War Notes* (1901), 28 & McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 88-9.

¹³⁵⁸ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 28, Delcassé to Aubert, 3 October 1899.

less the content of their discussions.¹³⁵⁹ When allusion to the Colonel became unavoidable, no hint of any close relationship was allowed to impinge and the description of his activities remained bland: “MM de Villebois-Mareuil, ancien colonel de 1er rég étranger, et Ernest Gallopaud, ancien officier des chausseurs qui suivent en amateur les opérations à Natal, ont assisté, m’assure-t-on, à la bataille”.¹³⁶⁰

Whereas Aubert’s scope for direct involvement with the French volunteers declined as the war progressed in 1900, that of the Consuls in Natal and Cape Colony began to develop as those volunteers started to be killed or captured. Raffray put his finger on the problem in seeking instructions for “la ligne de conduite” to be taken over a batch of POWs due for despatch to St Helena:

J’ai des raisons de croire qu’il y a parmi les prisonniers des français. Je n’ai pas cru devoir faire, auprès du Haut-Commissaire, de démarche ni d’enquête à ce sujet, craignant de recevoir un refus et que mon intervention en faveur de français qui ont perdu légalement leur nationalité et dont nous sommes supposés devoir ignorer la présence ne fut prise en mauvaise part.¹³⁶¹

Left to find his own solution to this conundrum, Raffray resolved to visit the POWs, vindicating his stance on the basis that he could do so in the wake of the German Consul who, without objection from the British, had already been to see German nationals taken prisoner.¹³⁶² Raffray’s stance remained generally reticent, in contrast to Aubert, who actively made efforts to free 2 French prisoners, “pris les armes à la main” by the British.¹³⁶³ As the fate of this pair illustrated - shipped off to Bermuda by the time Aubert had completed his report - in many ways there was little the Consuls could do for these individuals if the army was determined to detain them, although this did not later stop the Germans from boasting that their consular services were more effective in

¹³⁵⁹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 11, Aubert to Delcassé, 25 & 30 November 1899, make no mention of Aubert hosting, or even meeting, Villebois-Mareuil.

¹³⁶⁰ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 12, Aubert to Delcassé, 12 December 1899, on the Battle of Colenso.

¹³⁶¹ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Raffray to Delcassé, 4 April 1900.

¹³⁶² MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Raffray to Delcassé, 10 April 1900.

¹³⁶³ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 20, Aubert to Delcassé, 5 June 1901.

freeing their POWs than the French were theirs.¹³⁶⁴ The brunt of having to deal with most of the French volunteers who escaped both death and captivity fell to Amyot, who by 4 June was complaining that he had run out of money because “de nombreux français redescendent, demandent secours et repatriement”.¹³⁶⁵ By this stage, the wider disruption occasioned by the war meant that the other Consuls had for the most part more pressing matters than stray volunteer fighters to contend with, but for the approximately 10 months that they were a significant presence the sympathies of the men on the spot, in particular Aubert, had once again become distinct from those apparent among their political and diplomatic masters based in Paris.

Conclusion.

Regardless of their lack of impact on the Boer War as a whole, the French volunteers who fought on the Boer side enjoyed a disproportionately weighty influence in France. They stirred up sentiments, as much intrinsically nationalist as Anglophobic, that the government would far rather have been left dormant. What is apparent from examining all three groups is that, with differing emphases, relations with Britain were in different ways largely subordinated to other concerns. The agenda that the government in Paris, the press and the volunteers themselves had in mind, though not entirely neglecting France’s standing within the world as a whole, was one of that nation’s internal, domestic state more than its relations with Britain.

The German army officer in Nantes in 1940 who took the trouble to read the inscription on Villebois-Mareuil’s monument spared it from destruction on the basis of the Colonel’s presumed Anglophobia.¹³⁶⁶ The evidence points to the conclusion that this

¹³⁶⁴ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 27, Noailles to Delcassé, 16 December 1900, relaying a speech of German Foreign Minister Richtofen in the Reichstag on 12 December.

¹³⁶⁵ MAE, CCPN, T-O, Vol 29, Amyot to Delcassé, 4 June 1900. At least 2 Frenchmen remained in Boer ranks, however – Georges de Gourville in December 1900, and the Marquis de Kersauson until 1902 – Reitz, *Commando* (1950), 138, 155 & 312.

¹³⁶⁶ McNab, *French Colonel* (1975), 246. Picture 7.2.

was in large measure a misreading of the volunteers' motivation and legacy. Among those fighting in South Africa not for purely financial reasons, some elements of pro-Boer opposition to British imperialism were apparent but what far more dwarfed any such impulses was what the actions of the volunteers were meant to convey about France. Villebois-Mareuil, seconded by devoted lieutenants like d'Etchegoyen, intended his career in South Africa as an act of national redemption, and for it to be understood as such. Despite the volume of French press coverage allocated to the Boer War, and the sentiments roused on almost all sides against British policymakers and senior soldiers, it is equally apparent that by early 1900 France's domestic affairs - in particular the Dreyfus case, the Paris Exposition, and the unending parliamentary and political turbulence - were firmly back at the heart of Metropolitan France's concerns, if, indeed, they had ever gone away. Villebois-Mareuil and his death were rapidly absorbed not so much into an ongoing Anglophobic diatribe, cynical though the press remained about British progress in the war, as the very acrimonious and divisive discourse of French domestic politics, in the form of the Dreyfus case, which the Colonel had thought so damaging to France. Paradoxically, efforts were made on both left and right to appropriate Villebois-Mareuil's memory, whilst the French government tried to avoid entanglement with the volunteers. Whatever its Consuls on the spot in South Africa might be doing, the volunteers were an embarrassment and a nuisance who, without really diminishing British power, potentially stood not only to damage Anglo-French relations and obstruct the way to any possible diplomatic rapprochement between the countries but also act as a nucleus for anti-Republican nationalist agitation. It would seem therefore that a group of men ranking as little more than a minor curiosity in the history of the Boer War as a whole saw themselves, were at the time seen as, and should now primarily be interpreted as, impacting on the politics of their home country.

Illustrations (4).

Chapter 7: Picture 7.1 *Le Matin*, 7 April 1900, the original picture of the 3 Boer generations.



Picture 7.2 the Villebois-Mareuil statue at Nantes, from Keaney *Le lion et le sanglier* (1991).



Conclusion.

The Entente Cordiale was, with hindsight, a landmark of enormous importance in relations between the French and British states which justified the centennial celebrations of 2004. However, the extent to which the atmosphere surrounding the Entente, during its negotiation, at its signing on 9 April 1904, and in the years immediately succeeding it, can be summed up as conciliatory or calm at any level, can be overstated. The sometimes heated differences of opinion over long-standing colonial grievances kept the signing of the Entente in issue throughout negotiations.¹³⁶⁷ When Paul Cambon went directly from concluding the Entente to shout down the embassy's new telephone to Paris "It's signed", it was in response to pressure from a Delcassé still worried at the possibility of a last-minute foundering of the agreement.¹³⁶⁸ Thereafter the course of Anglo-French relations remained often tortured and fraught with misunderstandings up to August 1914 as statesmen on both sides of the Channel grappled with the extent to which the Entente was, or was not, a binding alliance.¹³⁶⁹ The influx of tens of thousands of British and Empire servicemen into France during World War I elicited strong, and mixed, reactions at all levels in France, sometimes to the extent of fearing that, once having occupied an enclave in Calais, the British army would never leave.¹³⁷⁰ Nor, in the medium term future of the 1920s and 1930s, did the existence of the Entente eliminate the vicissitudes in Anglo-French relations that had been a characteristic of diplomacy across the nineteenth century.

All of this was reflected in persisting attitudes from the very top to the bottom of French society, for all the efforts on the part of Loubet, Delcassé, Edward VII and others to inject a genuine streak of mutual international affection into the general publics of both

¹³⁶⁷ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 83-87 & Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 254-270.

¹³⁶⁸ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 87.

¹³⁶⁹ Keiger, *France and Origins* (1983), 102-116.

¹³⁷⁰ Bell, *France and Britain* (1994), 98-99.

countries. If the calming effect of 1904 is to an extent a retrospective illusion, what of the “storm” of Anglophobia supposed to have preceded it in 1898-1902?

French invasion literature, especially Driant’s, epitomised an enduring popular Anglophobia. This sentiment was only slightly altered, and developed, as a result of Fashoda and the Boer War, whether in the established medium of invasion literature or the new medium of postcards. Whilst some authors went on to accommodate the new diplomatic realities after 1904, Driant carried on preaching Anglophobia, despite “la duperie de l’entente cordiale”.¹³⁷¹ The Ecole Libre represented another long term influence, a contrast intellectually and in tone to invasion literature. The message of many of their serious commentaries, if stopping short of overt Anglophilia, was certainly more favourable to many aspects of British life. Greater change of emphasis and tone can be detected in the corpus of writing produced by the ELSP after 1898, when British behaviour on the international stage made Britain less tenable as an example of good practices. British foreign policy became more or less detached from the British institutions so attractive to some ELSP writers. Consequently, there was criticism of British actions during the Boer War (if not Fashoda), albeit in Bardoux’s dextrous hands rational and measured rather than Anglophobic in the true sense of the word. Arguably, generational change was more important in altering ELSP attitudes than these events. Bardoux and Halévy, if in one case losing the romantic youthful sheen with which he remembered Oxford and in the other growing cautiously from scepticism into a qualified Anglophilia, addressed concerns in their works that were not identical with Boutmy or Taine, if still coming to represent a fresh and regenerated approach, focused on and broadly sympathetic to Britain. What remained constant was that French internal concerns, however defined, continued to determine the focus of

¹³⁷¹ Cited by Martyn Cornick, “The Myth of ‘Perfidious Albion’”, in David Dutton, *Statecraft and Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press: 1995), 23.

ELSP writing even whilst it ostensibly addressed Britain. In its own way, invasion literature too, playing to the idea of Britain as an epitome of everything with which France did not identify itself, also placed French internal preoccupations centre stage.

The approach of France's diplomats and statesmen, excepting a few minor figures such as Aubert, was shaped predominantly by their rational conceptions of French self-interest, not sentiments. Even the most supposedly Anglophile of them all, Paul Cambon, had been swayed by the fundamental Anglo-French identity of interest over Russian designs on Turkey, then German ascendancy, and was happy both to recommend armed preparation against Britain and to haggle tenaciously over the terms of the Entente.¹³⁷² Cambon's marked reluctance to speak English throughout his 22 years in London hardly suggests a desire to grow close to those whose allegiance he sought, or to ingratiate himself with them.¹³⁷³ Notions of Anglophilia and Anglophobia are even more problematic when considering Delcassé. Entirely contradictory cases have been constructed to the effect that by June 1898 he was already bent upon reaching a major agreement with Britain that would attach it to the dual alliance, or that he became converted, slowly and reluctantly, to the idea of such an agreement only well after the end of the Boer War in May 1902, and in the meantime had wanted to align France with Germany against Britain. Neither case really seems to fit the facts. Capable statesman as he undoubtedly was, it seems far more likely that Delcassé was simply biding his time and kept his options open for a time when the best opportunity to promote French national interests, in whatever way, would present itself

At first sight, the French press and the Boer War volunteers might suggest a more obvious manifestation of Anglophobic rage occasioned by the incident and the war.

¹³⁷² DDF 1, xvi, 63, P.Cambon to Delcassé, 23 December 1899 & Rollo, *Entente Cordiale* (1969), 105.

¹³⁷³ Keiger, *France and Origins* (1983), 105 & Bell, *France and Britain* (1994), 18.

However, press coverage of Fashoda at the time of the crisis itself, and of the early Boer War, was far less intemperate than later literature on both has implied. Whilst there persisted an Anglophobic fringe on the nationalist right, and indeed cartoons in the illustrated press and postcards, much of the press was surprisingly restrained. During the Fashoda crisis, the press was far more concerned with domestic news, especially the Dreyfus case, than Marchand or Baratier. Further, what coverage there was of Fashoda was ambiguous in tone and often reflected French internal preoccupations. Only after the withdrawal of Marchand had been ordered did Anglophobia achieve real prominence. In the opening stages of the war, prior to the Léandre affair, the tone of the newspapers was more hostile to Britain than it had been during Fashoda, but still by no means unmitigated. Once more, internal preoccupations, and Dreyfus, dominated their pages. Whilst the guerrilla war afforded less headline grabbing news, it was the mid-1900 collapse of the Boer republics and the start of this final stage of the war which generated the most strident and memorable Anglophobic outbursts. Meanwhile, government action served to mute Marchand and the memory of Colonel Villebois-Mareuil. Even more surprising than the press was the seeming lack of evidence for Anglophobic sentiment amongst the volunteers who deliberately risked their lives in support of the Boer cause. Leaving aside those merely there to line their own pockets, the predominant concern was not Anglophobe, pro-Boer or, even, the rights and wrongs of the war.

Across the breadth of sources and individuals considered, the example of the volunteers brings out most emphatically the point that views articulated by the French about the British were above all else a product of French internal concerns. For Villebois-Mareuil and his closest companions, fighting in the war was about re-asserting a certain image of France abroad and regenerating a fresh sense of French identity and worth at home.

Such notions were explicitly stated in *War Notes*. Elsewhere the constant preoccupation with French affairs was no less evident for being sometimes only implicit. Whatever in British behaviour or values struck a French observer as remarkable necessarily implied that the French were characterised by more or less of the same thing. Publicly articulating that difference simultaneously insinuated that the observer's readers already had some notion of the French "norm" and/or reinforced a new understanding of French qualities, relative to what was imputed to the British. Above and beyond this less tangible process, figures like Villebois-Mareuil, if admired by Driant, were rapidly absorbed by the mainstream into discourse centred on French internal politics, whilst Fashoda and the Boer War were subordinated to domestic problems, especially the Dreyfus Affair.

As Romani acknowledged in undertaking his study of national character stretching across 164 years, a major methodological issue is that "a complete treatment" of international perceptions is not possible, potentially wide-ranging as they are.¹³⁷⁴ This study, in taking selected long-term currents of opinion and casting them against a detailed examination of notable events at a crucial moment in Anglo-French relations, must therefore leave questions open. What it does point to, however, is the ambiguous and paradoxical nature of concepts such as Anglophobia and Anglophilia, the changeability of wider French opinions, the relatively small numbers of Anglophobes whose vociferous manifestations belied their numbers, and across the political spectrum the persisting, overriding, primacy of domestic concerns within most French commentary on Britain.

¹³⁷⁴ Romani, *National Character* (2002), 5.

Appendices.

Appendix 1. Chapter 1-Invasion!

Storylines for the three works discussed.

Mindful of Britain's invasion of Egypt not 5 years previously, *Plus d'Angleterre* (162 pages) opens with simultaneous Russian sponsored tribal revolts and advances in Afghanistan, and civil unrest in Cairo. The first diplomatic incident occurs in September 1887 when British troops enter the French consulate, ignoring the Consul's protests in order to seize and shoot three Egyptian insurgents in refuge there. French restraint is exercised until on 5 October a French ship carrying more insurgents is sunk in the Suez Canal, leading to a declaration of war. Thereafter, the action focuses on British and French homelands; naval bombardments and a battle precede a French landing between Hastings and Worthing covered by torpedo boats, battles at Hastings and Tonbridge, then occupation of London by 23 October, armistice, and the imposition of a peace treaty involving heavy reparations and the dismembering of most of the British Empire. French annexation of Dover, and a 14 milliard indemnity, enable the construction of a channel tunnel.¹³⁷⁵ France benefits further by handing over choice territories-Malta to Italy, Cyprus to Turkey, Gibraltar to Spain-in diplomatic prestige, causing Germany to see the wisdom of returning Alsace Lorraine.¹³⁷⁶

Where *Plus* had envisaged the complete military defeat of Britain in the space of little less than one month from the start of hostilities, *La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe*, (22 pages) if equally as ambitious in scope, offered its readers a timetable that was only marginally less breathless. Here, the action begins on 16 July 1900 with the attack of British sponsored Afghans on Krub. Upon the refusal of the French President to guarantee his nation's neutrality, a British attack on Granville is repelled, starting the

¹³⁷⁵ Anon, *Plus d'Angleterre* (Paris, Paul Ollendorff Editeur: 1887).

¹³⁷⁶ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 54.

war. Faced with attacks from Russia, Menelick's Abyssinia, the Ottoman Sultan, and rebels both in Egypt (who assassinate Cromer) and India, the British have to deal with a French landing at Brighton that, after a short fight, finds the French army marching into London on 20 September 1900. Again, this leads to armistice, again to the dismemberment of the British Empire, to the benefit of France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Italy, Holland and the Boers. Australia and India achieve independence, and Canada joins the USA.¹³⁷⁷ Also of note in this story were the illustrations, not merely maps but pictures, in Clarke's judgement giving the illusion of real photography.¹³⁷⁸

By far the longest of the three, Driant's *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (1,350 pages) was partly absorbed by the interactions of a host of fictitious characters, as well as giving more detailed attention to real life figures than either of the other works.¹³⁷⁹ The 6 month timescale is also more generous. Volume 1 starts in March with the story's hero, naval officer Henri d'Argonne, escorted by the French Consul on Malta Raoul Petitot to the coast, taking a hazardous trip to Bizerta with the object of warning the Tunisian authorities of British preparations for a surprise attack. This attack having duly taken place and been repelled, the rest of the volume is taken up with naval bombardments and clashes in the Mediterranean, and Argonne's return to Paris. Volume 2 shifts the action to the English Channel, placing stress on the role of submarines as a means of intimidating the Royal Navy, negating its superior numbers, and conducting a *Guerre de Course*, to starve Britain of the trade and supplies upon which it was so dependent. History combines with French perceptions of British arrogance in the

¹³⁷⁷ Henri de Noussanne, "La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe", in *Le Monde Illustré*, 10 March 1900, 146-168.

¹³⁷⁸ I.F. Clarke, "Forecasts", *Comparative Studies*, Vol. 21.2 (1967), 4 & I.F. Clarke, "Future War", *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 405.

¹³⁷⁹ Capitaine Danrit, *La Guerre Fatale France-Angleterre* (Paris, Ernest Flammarion: 1903), 3 Vols. Clarke, "Future War", *Science Fiction*, Vol. 24.3, (1997), 396, seemingly working from a different edition of *La Guerre Fatale*, gives a page total of 1,192, placing it third in length out of the major Driant works cited. Only *Guerre de Demain* and *L'Invasion Noire* were longer.

storyline, in Argonne's mission to sink HMS Victory thus to destroy a naval relic shown "avec orgueil aux étrangers".¹³⁸⁰ A somewhat lame sub plot covers the unsuccessful attempts of British agent Walter Smith (who had already tried to obstruct Argonne's journey from Malta) and his web of spies to sabotage the factory manufacturing submarines and their supplies, thereby reflecting the preoccupations of French nationalists worried that an international network of British espionage extended into, and would subvert, everywhere, even metropolitan France. Volume 3 opens with "L'Expiation" of one of these spies, former French officer Louis Dhurr, confronting his old spymaster then returning to France to throw himself on the mercy of Argonne, who secures Dhurr a French army commission in time for him to participate in the first embarkation and landings over 10-11 September of 145,000 between Deal and Ramsgate, their ships protected by a fleet of submarines. The greater space of *La Guerre Fatale* allowed Driant to portray in more detail the landings and the climactic battles than *Plus d'Angleterre* or *La Guerre Anglo-Franco-Russe*, the outcome of these nevertheless being very similar. The triumphant entry of the French army into London was followed over 19-20 September by the complete defeat of other British units then the imposition in October of a peace in Paris. As well as the channel tunnel, this entails again the widespread carving up of British colonies, in the Americas to the USA and a new South American confederation, in Africa to France, Germany, Portugal, Abyssinia and a new South African confederation, and in Asia to France, Japan and Russia. India, Australia/New Zealand and (as in *Plus*) the Khedive's Egypt all achieve independence.¹³⁸¹

Most of the European developments, and indeed the course of Driant's war, rested on a long series of happy coincidences, and the role of Russia. Driant elaborated on this by

¹³⁸⁰ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 2, 82-3.

¹³⁸¹ Cf. Cornick, "Representations", *French Cultural Studies* Vol 17.2 (2006), 151-152.

transforming what would otherwise be an occasion for German friendship towards Britain (the French invasion) with the simultaneous and therefore unmissable opportunity for territorial gains for both Germany and Russia in the former Hapsburg Empire. German arms are thus preoccupied in central Europe at the same time as France confronts Britain. Russian strength and German gains in Eastern Europe make the loss of Alsace Lorraine something the Kaiser has to accept.¹³⁸² So France acquires not only Cyprus, but also the lost provinces, Belgium, and Morocco, with Russia remaining a permanent check on Japanese ambitions in the Far East and German in Europe.¹³⁸³ Ever mindful of Anglo-French history, further, Driant did not omit to underline the justice of this settlement by making the parallel with England's occupation of its former enclave at Calais, and offered his readers the claim that 10 milliards had been the sum that the British had in 1871 advised Bismarck to extract from France.¹³⁸⁴

A note on the timing and anachronisms of Driant's future war.

Despite the lack of any specified date in the title of *La Guerre Fatale*, hints throughout the books (for example alluding to the length of the Austro-Hungarian Emperor's reign¹³⁸⁵) suggest that the events they described were meant to have taken place in 1908, anachronistically given that by then many of the figures mentioned were incapacitated (Joseph Chamberlain, Prime Minister at the start of *La Guerre Fatale*, had undergone a series of disabling strokes from 1 June 1905 onwards), dead, or about to die (Campbell-Bannerman, put up as Chamberlain's October 1908 successor, in fact died on 22 April 1908, as did soldiers William Gatacre in 1905 and Redvers Buller in 1908, both in any case having been retired from the army during the Boer War), and Roberts, depicted

¹³⁸² Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 74-86, also made the forecast of an Austrian internal collapse, with Germany acquiring many of the German speaking areas, and thus being reconciled to losing Alsace Lorraine to France.

¹³⁸³ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 3, 441-447.

¹³⁸⁴ Cf. Cornick, "Representations", *French Cultural Studies* Vol 17.2 (2006), 152.

¹³⁸⁵ Danrit, *Guerre Fatale* (1903), Vol 1, 394.

killed leading a last desperate charge on 20 September, had resigned as Commander in Chief in 1904.¹³⁸⁶

Whither French Invasion Literature?

Up to 1903, French and British invasion literature had pitched the armed forces of those two nations, with varying allies and outcomes, against each other. However, in Britain the orientation of invasion literature, as signalled by *The Riddle of the Sands*, was drastically and permanently altered, in recognition of the changing diplomatic position of the British. German invasion literature also reflected the new political reality, by positioning the French as allies of Britain.¹³⁸⁷ The Entente Cordiale, in potentially robbing French invasion literature writers of their most prominent and long standing adversary, threatened to put those writers out of an often quite lucrative job: so, where was their genre to go?¹³⁸⁸

There were two obvious responses, one of which was to focus exclusively on the imagined war of *revanche* against Germany. Complementary to this, the other was to concentrate on the technical aspects of war. Before the 1880s, the small amount of literature, produced mainly by military men, contemplated war as a professional exercise for the benefit of other military men or interested civilians. Such less populist literature, once more forming a greater part of the French output after 1903, Clarke

¹³⁸⁶ Pakenham, *Boer War* (1979), 457 & 574, Massey, *Dreadnought* (1991), 336, 565-6 & 628-9, and Farwell, *Great Boer War* (1999), 114 & 319.

¹³⁸⁷ For example in Ferdinand Grautoff 1906 *Der Zusammenbruch der Alten Welt* (1905) quoted by Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 217, placing French ships at the side of British in attacking Cuxhaven, and Max Heinrichka 1913 *100 Jahre deutsche Zukunft* (1913) quoted by Clarke, *Great War* (1997), 404 & 407, once again putting French & British ships in concert, if with an overall French policy characterised by self-interest and worry over what was happening in the Mediterranean.

¹³⁸⁸ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 101, contrasting anti-German novels with the anti-British, suggested of French invasion writers that “they apparently acted on the principle that, even if the Germans were enemies, the British were undoubtedly their most hated enemies”.

records, demanded less by way of “exciting but improbable stories” especially at sea, and contemplated “a straightforward military affair” directed against Germany.¹³⁸⁹

Such changes were not universal. Driant was not immune from technical concerns focussed on a possible war with Germany. Carrying a self explanatory title, *Vers un Nouveau Sédan* (1906) warned of the consequences of lesser officers being left at liberty to choose between the various tactical theories propounded by several Generals.¹³⁹⁰ But more characteristic of Driant’s response was to (re) explore new war orientated technologies for their own sake, taking them to new areas, hence *Un Dirigeable au Pôle Nord* (1910), and another to seek out new opponents. *L’Aviateur du Pacifique* (1909) combined the two, depicting a French inventor who circumnavigated the globe in his plane, and witnessed a surprise Japanese attack on US forces at Midway.

The other part of Driant’s response to the new political reality was, simply, to reject the Entente Cordiale and British goodwill. Stating that after 1903 British authors turned to the idea of Germany as the main threat, with Britain and France potential allies, Tombs suggests that “Their French counterparts eventually did the same, eventually even fire-breathing anglophobes such as ‘Capitaine Danrit’”.¹³⁹¹ But there is little evidence that Driant, even years after the Entente, had renounced his Anglophobia as Tombs suggests.¹³⁹² In *L’Invasion Noire*, (1894), he had already cast the British as subordinate, if not the less treacherous, villains whose simple love of money had impelled them to

¹³⁸⁹ Clarke, *Voices* (1992), 116-7, citing *Le débâcle de l’Allemagne dans la Prochaine Guerre*, Anon, *Une Guerre Franco-Allemande* (1906), Arthur Boucher’s strategic study *La France Victorieuse dans la Guerre de Demain* (1911), Arthur Boucher *L’Offensive contre l’Allemagne* (1912), and Franc Gaulois *La Fin de la Prusse et le Démembrement de l’Allemagne* (1913) which had the French, assisted by the Royal Navy and 300,000 British troops rushed through a newly constructed channel tunnel, defeating Germany.

¹³⁹⁰ Discussed by Douglas Porch, *The March to the Marne, The French Army 1871-1914* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1981), 214.

¹³⁹¹ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 430.

¹³⁹² Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 429.

supply arms to the Arabs and the blacks, then stand aside as the invasion of continental Europe took place. Five years after the Entente, this was a plot largely repeated in *L'Invasion Jaune*, (1909), with Britain and the USA arming the Asian powers. Driant continued to blame Britain for “l’affaire lugubre” of Dreyfus, and the work of French freemasonry in undermining (Catholic) France, perceiving in the new international alignment something that was wholly to the benefit of Britain: “Tous nos malheurs sont venus de cette Entente Cordiale qu’elle a transformé en alliance au seul profit de ses intérêts et de ses rancunes”.¹³⁹³ At the same time, further editions of *La Guerre Fatale* continued to be published, and to sell; Tombs and Serodes record very similar sentiments being expressed by Driant in the 1908 version, which alluded to the continued spread of Anglophobia among the general population “despite official pressure and the trickery of the Entente Cordiale”.¹³⁹⁴

Whilst Driant, starting with the monumental 14 volume *Guerre Maritime et Sous Marin* (1908), published no fewer than 11 new novels in the 6 years before 1914, it should also be remembered that not everyone in France or Britain had found the chauvinistic tone of invasion literature to their liking. In Britain, from 1908 the backlash took the form of several satirical pieces, for example by A.A.Milne and P.G.Wodehouse, and drawings by Heath Robinson ridiculing the scaremongering of Le Queux and the others.¹³⁹⁵ Again, there was a contrast between Britain and France in that at least some of the corresponding French critique was directed not at their own invasion literature but at the British. The Preface of a 1910 French Anthology of British invasion literature, entitled “A Powerful Latent Anxiety”, attacked the alarmist atmosphere of a country where wild

¹³⁹³ Capitaine Driant, *L'Invasion Jaune*, (Paris, Ernest Flammarion: 1909), quoted by www.roman-daventures.com/auteurs/france/danrit 11 September 2008.

¹³⁹⁴ Quoted by Tombs, *Sweet Enemy*, (2006), 429, CF. Serodes, *Anglophobie*, (2010), 59.

¹³⁹⁵ Clarke, *Tale of Next Great War*, (1995), 251-6, quoting A.A.Milne *The Secret of the Army Aeroplane*, (1908), Clarke, *Great War*, (1997), 313-323 quoting P.G.Wodehouse *Swoop! Or, How Clarence Saved England*, (1909), and 281-292 Robinson’s 1910 drawings.

rumours of under sea tunnels and mysterious airships “which, in the most suspicious way, only appeared at night” were credulously circulated.¹³⁹⁶ Partly for political reasons, “a large number of writers have exploited this permanent fear”, and in the opinion of Louis Capperon such exaggerated anxieties put the British in danger of losing their reputation for calm.¹³⁹⁷

Appendix 2. Chapter 2 – Les Sciences Po.

ELSP – Total pupil numbers, composition and destinations.

Pupil totals were 70 in 1872, 230 in 1880, 375 in 1889, 486 in 1896 and over 600 in 1906.¹³⁹⁸ According to Zeldin, “unique in its international outlook”, the ELSP always attracted foreign pupils.¹³⁹⁹ From the start, with Lord Brabazon of the British embassy, there were foreigners at the ELSP, numbering 69 (out of a total of 586) by 1905.¹⁴⁰⁰ Austen Chamberlain was the only Briton in 1885-6, but “got to know a certain number of foreigners, especially from Balkan states”, who, along with others from Japan, China, India and Persia, seem to have been the more typical nationalities present.¹⁴⁰¹

Reflecting something of what must have been the contemporary rhetoric of the École were the 1904 claims of Boutmy’s admirer, J.E.C.Bodley, that the 40 ELSP staff “give their services on such generous terms that their teaching is placed within the reach of students of modest resources by a system of almost nominal fees”.¹⁴⁰² In reality, the high annual fees of the ELSP ensured that, whilst it remained nominally open to all,

¹³⁹⁶ Louis Capperon, *Les Fictions Guerrières Anglaises*, (Paris, Bertrand: 1910), quoted by Clarke, *Great War*, (1997), 278 & 279.

¹³⁹⁷ Capperon, *Fictions Guerrières*, (1910), quoted by Clarke, *Great War*, (1997), 280.

¹³⁹⁸ Figures from De Foville, “Notice Historique” in *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 45, Levasseur, “Boutmy” in *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 161, and Keiger, “Patriotism”, in Tombs, (ed.), *Nationhood*, (1991), 260.

¹³⁹⁹ Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, Vol 2, (1977), 343.

¹⁴⁰⁰ Damamme, “Genèse Sociale” in *Actes de la Recherche*, Vol 70 (Nov 1987), 31, and Levasseur, “Boutmy” in *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 161.

¹⁴⁰¹ A.Chamberlain, *The Years*, (1935), 16, and De Foville, “Notice Historique” in *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 46.

¹⁴⁰² Boutmy, *English People*, (1904), Introduction, x.

without any formal academic entry requirement, in practice access to its teaching remained with few exceptions the preserve of none below the level of the Parisian haut bourgeoisie.¹⁴⁰³ Keiger estimated that high fees of 300 Francs p.a. meant that from 1885-1913 over 92% of the pupils came “from the upper bourgeoisie”.¹⁴⁰⁴

Vanneuville records a continual increase in the number of courses offered by ELSP- 10 in 1872, 17 in 1894, 36 in 1913- with an accompanying specialization in the courses, and from 1884 their sub division into four distinct sections, namely diplomatic, administrative, financial/economic and general.¹⁴⁰⁵ Many ELSP alumni continued to end up in important offices of state. Ultimately, the ELSP came to enjoy virtual monopoly over entry into the diplomatic corps, Council of State, the finance inspectorate, and the court of accounts, with indirect influence on business & industry thanks to men who entered state service only later to resign for these other careers, hence its “outsized influence on the intellectual formation of the members of the Republic’s *grand corps de l’état* for three generations”.¹⁴⁰⁶

However, not all pupils were destined for such careers. Among those signing up in November 1890 to study courses led by Sorel, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, and Albert Vandal was Marcel Proust. His father, the eminent physician Adrien Proust, harboured (ultimately frustrated) plans for Marcel to enter the diplomatic service, hence his entry in the École.¹⁴⁰⁷ Although he managed to pass the exams he sat there in mid-1892, the

¹⁴⁰³ Levasseur, “Boutmy” in *Sciences Politiques Annales*, tome 21, (March 1906), 167, affirming the lack of any need for a diploma to enter the école, and Keiger, *France and the Origins* (1983), 31.

¹⁴⁰⁴ Keiger, “Patriotism”, in Tombs, (ed.), *Nationhood* (1991), 260.

¹⁴⁰⁵ Vanneuville, “Mise en forme”, *Politix*, 15. 59, (2002), 84.

¹⁴⁰⁶ Osborne, “Social Science” in *Historical Reflections*, Vol 8 (1981), 51.

¹⁴⁰⁷ Philippe Michel-Thiriet, *The Book of Proust* (London, Chatto & Windus: 1989), 6, 7, & 90 and George D. Painter, *Marcel Proust-a Biography* (London, Penguin: 1990), 80.

pupil “did not shine through diligence” at ELSP.¹⁴⁰⁸ His ELSP activities in 1893 included attendance at a simulated parliamentary debate, and a dramatic production.¹⁴⁰⁹

Methodology and Sources - Demolins *A Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?*

Sacrificing substance for the sake of a sufficiently exuberant if not provocative polemical tone that would resonate with his audience, Demolins’ work rested on a lesser and less well marshaled evidential base than the output of many other ELSP writers:

- 1) A single citation of shipping figures through the Suez Canal did no more than hint at the levels of economic activity in British colonies so thoroughly examined by Bardoux.¹⁴¹⁰ Bardoux carefully weighed the power of Britain, relative to several other countries, using multiple indicators (e.g. levels of production, shipping activity, balance of trade figures), concluding ten years after Demolins’ work that Germany represented the most dangerous and growing commercial rival to the British. Even if the Germans were not yet in a position to challenge Britain on equal terms, he concluded “l’Allemagne, voilà l’ennemi”.¹⁴¹¹ Instead of assessing Britain in relation to American or German competitors like Bardoux, having summarily dismissed the future prospects of Germany Demolins preferred to lump the two English speaking “Anglo-Saxon” nations together. They were not so much considered as rivals to each other as one, joint, entity in relation to France.
- 2) Neglected altogether were themes not only of Anglo-US rivalry but separatist sentiment in some of the colonies, perhaps played down by Boutmy’s *Constitutional Law* but later covered by Bardoux in a sophisticated fashion.¹⁴¹²
- 3) Paradoxically, overlooking the avowed aims of Boutmy and the ELSP as it had evolved by the 1890s, Demolins took for granted the theoretical bent, and the want of initiative

¹⁴⁰⁸ Michel-Thiriet, *Book of Proust* (1989), 77 & 75: Phillip Kolb (ed), *Correspondance de Marcel Proust, Vol 1* (Paris, Plon:1970), 62 & 172-173, specifying these as oral exams.

¹⁴⁰⁹ Kolb (ed.), *Correspondance de Marcel Proust, Vol 1* (1970), 65 & 68.

¹⁴¹⁰ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), xxix, Bardoux, *Les Crises politiques* (1907), chapter 1.

¹⁴¹¹ Bardoux, *Crises politiques* (1907), 26.

¹⁴¹² For a reasoned and detailed discussion of colonial separatism and the mother country’s views of Empire, see Bardoux, *Crises bellicieuses* (1906), 415-480.

and independence of thought, in state employees, to ram home the extent of the contrasts he wished to make.

- 4) Similarly absolute according to him was the complete lack of material help and hereditary wealth given by Anglo-Saxon parents to their offspring, in dramatic contrast to French fathers “working like a horse” to endow their offspring, or practicing birth control.¹⁴¹³
- 5) Demolins’ comments on “Anglo-Saxon” education were derived almost entirely from a single brochure, and a single school founded less than nine years previously with, by the headmaster’s admission, no more than 50 pupils.¹⁴¹⁴ It was, without further evidence, simply assumed following the brochure that “really a whole nation are brought up under such methods”.¹⁴¹⁵
- 6) Chapter 2, mostly criticising the German education system, relied entirely on a single speech (undated and unattributed by the author) made by the Kaiser.

Finally, whilst Demolins did signal his debt to Le Play and Taine, Charle states that was not the case for what he drew from Leclerc, *L’Education des classes moyennes et dirigeantes en Angleterre* (Paris, 1894), or Boutmy, as Demolins extensively “borrowed from them without acknowledgement”.¹⁴¹⁶

However, this is not to assert that Demolins had nothing original to say. His uncompromising criticism of Germany, for example, was unusual in ELSP circles. Demolins was at variance with many leading academic figures, among them Durkheim and Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, who praised the qualities of German science, in rejecting the idea that “if the Germans conquered us, it was because their schools were superior to

¹⁴¹³ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 101.

¹⁴¹⁴ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 58 & 76.

¹⁴¹⁵ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 47.

¹⁴¹⁶ Charle, “French Intellectuals” Charle, Vincent & Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes* (2007), 244-245.

our own”.¹⁴¹⁷ Demolins considered the German education system, especially since 1870, to have been not superior but unworkable, and completely inappropriate for the Kaiser’s stated and contradictory aims of both shaping the young to favour militarism, national unity and to “open the duel against democracy”, and to train “practical men, capable of shifting for themselves, and to endow them with a knowledge of the world”.¹⁴¹⁸ The results actually achieved from the education given tended to increase rather than diminish the German Middle class’ “native unfitness for the struggle for life” to which Demolins saw the British system as so well adapted.¹⁴¹⁹

Demolins was equally dismissive of German commercial progress, commenting that it depended on cheap and common manufactured items, the success of which was sustained by low wages, the clients’ “lack of fastidiousness” at home, and facilitated transport to new markets, equally indiscriminating, in “backward countries with simple, half-civilised or half-savage consumers”.¹⁴²⁰

In sum, Demolins was convinced that a combination of Socialism and militarism would finish the German Empire off, given time. “The great peril, the great rivalry, are on the other side of the Channel, and on the other side of the Atlantic”, as the Anglo-Saxon settler with the plough promised a more subtle, but insidious and long-lasting, threat, than any German battalions or weapons.¹⁴²¹

¹⁴¹⁷ Digeon, *La Crise Allemande* (1959), 467. Favre, *Naissances* (1989), 29, De Foville, “Notice Historique” in *Séances*, Vol 65 (1911), 40, and Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 15, & 20, which however conceded that the German educational systems had prior to 1860 been better in producing the thinkers appropriate to Germany’s status at that time than the post 1870 system in shaping Imperial German colonisers fit for the “struggle for life”.

¹⁴¹⁸ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 32, 34, 25 and 29.

¹⁴¹⁹ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 35.

¹⁴²⁰ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), xxxii & xxxiii.

¹⁴²¹ Demolins, *Anglo-Saxon Superiority* (1898), 104

Appendix 3. Chapter 3-Fashoda, the Boer War and their Impact.

A Broader Anglo-French Landscape; Rival events of 1898-1902, part 1.

Not all Anglo-French contact on the international stage necessarily entailed attention-grabbing confrontation along the lines of the Fashoda incident:

- 1) Ottoman Empire. Before arriving as ambassador in Constantinople in August 1891, Paul Cambon had already noted that Britain and France had a distinct identity of interest on the Ottoman Empire in Europe and Near Eastern Asia, as against Russian ambitions to profit from a destabilisation of the Empire.¹⁴²² Cambon overtly showed his inclinations in his close relationship with his opposite number Philip Currie on such issues as the Turkish massacres of Armenians in 1894-5 and the co-operation in 1898 between British and French troops sent to keep the peace in Crete whilst a suitable settlement could be worked out between the Cretans and Constantinople.¹⁴²³
- 2) Localised African agreements. In June 1898, Hanotaux finalised an agreement bringing localised frictions in West Africa to an end by defining respective British and French spheres of influence in the region.¹⁴²⁴ After Fashoda, Cambon and Salisbury reached a parallel agreement for eastern Africa in March 1899.
- 3) Other episodes invited Anglo-French collaboration as part of a wider international consensus, notably the May-July 1899 Hague Disarmament Conference, and responding to the Chinese Boxer Rebellion which, unfolding from late May 1900, displaced the Boer War for several months as a prime preoccupation in the press and at the Quai d'Orsay.¹⁴²⁵

¹⁴²² Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 38-39.

¹⁴²³ Eubank, *Paul Cambon* (1960), 48-50.

¹⁴²⁴ *DDF*, 1.xiv, 14 June 1898 (4 & 18 July, 19 & 23 August and 4 September 1898, 363, 386-9, 463, 474 & 509) and Grenville, *Lord Salisbury* (1964), 122-124.

¹⁴²⁵ See *DDF* 1, xvi, November 1899-December 1900, Avant-Propos v, "C'est aux affaires de Chine que la majeure partie du présent volume est consacrée... Les dossiers Troubles de Chine, conservés dans les archives du Ministère des affaires étrangères, sont volumineux", and Massie, *Dreadnought* (1991), 278-287 for an account of the facts.

Broader Anglo-French Landscape; Rival events of 1898-1902, part 2

There is, however, a case to be made that Fashoda and the Boer War embodied and accentuated a pre existing, persisting, dissonance between French and British attitudes and policies, both internal and external, a dissonance that persisted outside of those events;

- 1) Dreyfus Case. Much of Britain was deeply critical of the French handling of Dreyfus, de Courcel warning Hanotaux that British public opinion was “unanimous in proclaiming that Dreyfus has been illegally condemned”.¹⁴²⁶ This was true of the press and the political establishment, as witness the Dreyfusard demonstrations in London and the telegraph sent en clair to the British embassy in Paris by Queen Victoria, who later cancelled her customary holiday in France.¹⁴²⁷ Whilst *The Daily Mail* campaign for a British boycott of the French Exposition, opening in April 1900, petered out largely ineffectually, such public displays were only likely to agitate an already embittered nationalist, anti Dreyfusard right still further.
- 2) The American-Spanish War of April-August 1898. If Britain was only one among many foreign countries to earn condemnation in the likes of *La Libre Parole* for its criticism on Dreyfus, the British were unique among the European Great Powers for their pro-US sympathies during the war.¹⁴²⁸ Delcassé and Jules Cambon, in contrast, sought to act as strictly neutral mediators, their aim to bring the war to the quickest conclusion, with the underlying objective of forestalling US attacks on metropolitan Spain, and thus US naval penetration of the Mediterranean.¹⁴²⁹ This was at a time when ideas of Anglo-Saxon hegemony, seriously entertained by the likes of Cecil Rhodes, and aired by

¹⁴²⁶ Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered* (1970), 65, quoting De Courcel on 9 February 1898, and CF. Cornick “Réception de l’Affaire”, Drouin (ed.), *L’Affaire Dreyfus* (1994), passim.

¹⁴²⁷ Tombs, *Sweet Enemy* (2006), 420-422.

¹⁴²⁸ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 146.

¹⁴²⁹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 80-81 and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 86-7 & 98.

Joseph Chamberlain, prompted many in Britain such as Rudyard Kipling to welcome American expansionism.¹⁴³⁰

3) The Phantom alliance. When this rhetorical Anglo-Saxon goodwill was extended to Germans, in the notion of a proposed British diplomatic alignment not just with the USA but Germany, this provoked great anxiety in France. Chamberlain toyed with the idea of a wholesale alliance, repeatedly broaching such a possibility in well publicised speeches on 13 May 1898 and 30 November 1899.¹⁴³¹ Further evidence that Britain was as capable of coming to limited agreements with Berlin as it was with Paris came in the form of the 30 August 1898 treaty providing for an Anglo-German carve up of the Portuguese colonial empire in the event of the latter's financial collapse.¹⁴³² All of this led to some rather tentative (if ultimately inconclusive) negotiations, looking to the creation of an Anglo German alliance, from late 1900 to early 1901.¹⁴³³

4) Italy - Whilst a Franco-German diplomatic rapprochement remained elusive, more tangible results were achieved in the case of Germany's Triple Alliance partner Italy. The Italian government had looked to London rather than Paris for help after the defeat of its colonial forces at Adowa on 1 March 1896.¹⁴³⁴ Thereafter, the dawning realisation of British weakness during the Boer war pushed Italian policymakers to conclude that they could no longer look to Britain for security of their interests in the Mediterranean. If Rome could not rely on British strength, then one solution was to turn to Paris instead. A process of incremental agreements, facilitated by Camille Barrère, French ambassador to Rome from 1897, covered commercial relations in November 1898, North African Colonial affairs in December 1900 and (threatening to undermine the

¹⁴³⁰ See for example Cecil Rhodes, "Confession of Faith", 1877, cited in John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes* (London, Hutchinson: 1976), 248-252, and Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden", in R.T.Jones (ed), *Collected Poems of Rudyard Kipling* (London, Wordsworth Editions: 2001), 334-335, first published in the wake of US seizure of the Philippines, and encouraging US colonisation of that territory.

¹⁴³¹ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 261-2 and 274-6.

¹⁴³² Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 265-6.

¹⁴³³ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 249-251, 253-255 & 280-293, Kiste, *Wilhelm II* (2001), 104, 107-9 & 113 and Ramsden, *Don't* (2006), 60 & 63.

¹⁴³⁴ Bates, *Fashoda Incident* (1984), 48, and John Gooch, "Italy, Abyssinia and the Sudan, 1885-1898", in Spiers, (ed), *Sudan Reconquest* (1998), 141.

Triplice altogether) a mutual pledge in June 1902 that should either country be the subject of an act of aggression, the other would remain strictly neutral.¹⁴³⁵

- 5) Russia & Japan. French experience of Fashoda and fears more generally of British acquisitiveness led them to negotiate with Russia a new, anti British, slant to the Dual Alliance in 1901-2.¹⁴³⁶ Simultaneous British worries that they no longer had the strength to project power to every point of the globe where Imperial interests might be threatened, a self-perception of weakness greatly accentuated by the war, again pushed British foreign policy into a position of indirect antagonism towards France in China.¹⁴³⁷ Whilst the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 30 January 1902 was in effect a localised agreement not directly related to events in Africa, in the context of Anglo-French relations it fostered implicit rivalry by aligning Britain explicitly with a leading opponent of the territorial ambitions of France's main ally Russia.

Appendix 4. Chapter 4-Irredeemable Foe or Potential Friend.

The Governmental Structure of the Third Republic and the Quai d'Orsay.¹⁴³⁸

The Minister for Foreign Affairs was answerable to both the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister who headed the cabinet, of which the Minister was a member. The cabinet in turn was reliant on the support of a majority in parliament, comprising the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The lack of formal party structure/discipline and the shifting, contingent nature of allegiances within the Chamber rarely guaranteed a government majority for very long, and therefore tended to generate relatively weak and often short lived ministries. However, Anderson laid stress on the essential continuity of Third Republic Governments which, though changing Prime Ministers, tended persistently to draw on the same pool of would-be Ministers. Thus, on the fall of

¹⁴³⁵ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 82-83 & 138-146, Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 486, Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 89, 98 & 110-112, and Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 305.

¹⁴³⁶ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 122-126, and Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 97-98 & 101.

¹⁴³⁷ For the nature of British arguments surrounding proposals for the alliance, invoking not least the drain of the war on the Treasury, see Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 295-304.

¹⁴³⁸ Clarke, *Sleepwalkers* (2013), 190-196.

a Prime Minister, it was not unusual for some of the ministers from the former administration to be re-appointed, albeit in different jobs. A government involving no minister from its direct predecessor was a rarity, although one such was that of Léon Bourgeois (November 1895-April 1896).¹⁴³⁹

More than any other, the Foreign Ministry retained individual ministers for prolonged periods across several the tenure of different Prime Ministers. Gabriel Hanotaux's period at the Quai d'Orsay, with the exception of Bourgeois' ministry, stretched for four years from May 1894 until the June 1898 arrival of Delcassé, who in turn stayed for nearly seven years in which time he worked with five Prime Ministers, and two Presidents.

Table 1: French Presidents, Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers, 1896-1905.

President	Prime Minister¹⁴⁴⁰	Foreign Minister
Jan. 1895 - February 1899 Felix Faure	April 1896 - June 1898 Jules Méline	30 April 1896 – 14 June 1898. Gabriel Hanotaux
	June – November 1898 Henri Brisson	29 June 1898 – 6 June 1905 Théophile Delcassé
Feb.1899 – February 1906 Emile Loubet	November 1898 - June 1899. Charles Dupuy	
	June 1899 – June 1902 René Waldeck-Rousseau	
	June 1902 - January 1905 Emile Combes	
Feb. 1906 – February 1913 Armand Fallières	January 1905 - March 1906. Maurice Rouvier	17 June 1905 - 14 March 1906. Maurice Rouvier

Such longevity in ministerial office did not guarantee that the minister had a firm grip on policy. Hayne identifies the example of Stephen Pichon, whose extended stay of four years (October 1906-November 1910) at the Quai d'Orsay did little to vitiate his ineffectual character, his relative laziness, and willingness to delegate not just administrative tasks but policy decisions to high ranking bureaucrats such as George Louis and Philippe Berthelot on whose advice he remained heavily reliant. From 1906-9

¹⁴³⁹ Anderson, *France* (1977), 78.

¹⁴⁴⁰ Information from Hutton, *Historical Dictionary* (1986), 1120.

therefore, the Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau was able to make his imprint on French foreign policy (as later did President Poincaré).¹⁴⁴¹ This raises the question of just how important a ministerial incumbent, and hence his desires, necessarily might be for the purposes of formulating policy. The answer seems to have lain in the character and motivation of each particular occupant of the Quai d'Orsay, and how they interplayed with those of his political colleagues and bureaucrats.

Delcassé and his political peers.

It seems to be agreed that in the Delcassé period, up until the Rouvier ministry in 1905, there is little evidence to suggest that Prime Ministers exercised much influence over, or had much interest in, foreign policy. For the entire three years of Waldeck-Rousseau's time in office, Hayne can identify only one occasion of dissonance.¹⁴⁴² According to Andrew, Combes was simply ignored by his Foreign Minister, whereas Brisson, Dupuy and Waldeck-Rousseau all shared the Presidents' confidence in Delcassé. The "limited and sporadic" participation of the President was marginally more marked under Faure, who influenced and eased, in the context of the gap between Brisson and Dupuy ministries, the decision to withdraw Marchand from Fashoda, than under Loubet, who, partly out of belief in limiting presidential powers, was loath to involve himself in policymaking.¹⁴⁴³ In short, though, other ministers, and the President, neither sought nor were able to make a significant impact on French foreign policy before 1905 with Delcassé at the Quai.

Delcassé and the Centrale.

The diplomats and bureaucrats of the Quai d'Orsay were potentially another matter, possessing the motivation, knowledge and power to make a real impact on French policy. The Quai d'Orsay's offices in Paris, the so-called Centrale, comprised six

¹⁴⁴¹ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 171-8.

¹⁴⁴² Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 32 "Apart from questioning Delcassé's judgment over the international force employed during the Boxer rebellion, Waldeck-Rousseau rarely intervened in matters of foreign policy."

¹⁴⁴³ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968),

divisions, of which the three most important were the Political division, the Commercial division and the Private Ministerial Cabinet.¹⁴⁴⁴ Responsible for diplomats serving outside France, the Political division by the late 1890s was in broad terms losing ground to the Commercial division, which was responsible for Consular services, and the Private Ministerial Cabinet which functioned as a liaising body between the minister and other departments. In theory, the Chef du Cabinet should have had little influence, but here as elsewhere personality counted for more than (often theoretical) lines of responsibility.

Under Delcassé, Quai d'Orsay administration remained less than rational. Even basic day to day things such as remuneration for Quai staff were mismanaged; pay came erratically, sometimes months or years late, for Raindre among others did not necessarily correspond to the calibre of work being carried out by the individual concerned, and, especially in the cases of the Constantinople, St Petersburg and Vienna embassies, failed to meet the unavoidable expenses of those serving abroad.¹⁴⁴⁵ Such top posts therefore tended to remain in the hands of those with substantial private incomes, a situation hardly consistent with Republican efforts since the 1880s to reduce the aristocratic element amongst French representatives abroad.

Despite, or perhaps because of, Delcassé's own capacity for hard work and disinclination to delegate except to trusted individuals, systems for appointment of officials at the Quai and the atmosphere of the Centrale remained much the same. Personnel movements were determined by the chance of family and friendships rather than objective assessment of suitability. Entrance examinations introduced were

¹⁴⁴⁴ The other divisions were the Divisions des fonds et de la comptabilité, du Protocole, and des Archives- Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 10 & 12-19.

¹⁴⁴⁵ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 119-120 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 20.

“designed to screen out the undesirables rather than to test qualities of diplomacy”.¹⁴⁴⁶ Decisions on entry into the Quai “remained liable to subjective judgments” and were shaped by patronage.¹⁴⁴⁷ Delcassé, simply took on as much work himself as possible, so reforms in his period were piecemeal.¹⁴⁴⁸ The limited number of those working at the Quai made possible the continuance of a “leisurely” family atmosphere.¹⁴⁴⁹ Amateur working practices persisted in the Centrale, officials in the Division des Fonds and the Political division rarely working more than a 5 hour day.¹⁴⁵⁰ The common class origins of many Quai men not only implied a common mentality but facilitated much socialising, which centred on the daily “thé de cinque heures”, the Political and Commercial divisions competing to see who could make the best tea.¹⁴⁵¹

If Delcassé was allowed considerable latitude by Presidents and Prime Ministers, and proved able largely to ignore cabinet or parliament, a possible block to his imprint might have been the coherent influence of the permanent bureaucrats within the Centrale. However, the way that the Quai functioned arguably enabled a capable and well motivated minister with definite ideas of his own to shape policy by relying only on those who shared his views or commanded his respect. Where appointments in the Centrale were later to be a site of conflict between officials favoured by Paul/Jules Cambon and the Sciences Po old boys’ network, up to 1905 Delcassé proved able to influence personnel appointments so as to place those he trusted most in the positions where they were able to support his policies. In the minister’s earlier years, the grasp he soon acquired on his brief was symbolised by his surprise appointment, without

¹⁴⁴⁶ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 22.

¹⁴⁴⁷ Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), 28 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 27-28.

¹⁴⁴⁸ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 61-62.

¹⁴⁴⁹ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 20 & 61, for 1898 cited 122 in the Diplomatic Corps most of whom knew each other and looked down upon the 427 in the Consular Corps.

¹⁴⁵⁰ Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), 26 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 64.

¹⁴⁵¹ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 76-77, Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), 25 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 24 & 28.

consultation of anyone else, of Gaston Raindre as Political Director, in which post he remained until mid 1902.¹⁴⁵² Opinions differ as to the reason for Raindre's lack of impact on policy; Andrew wrote him off as "a non entity", and at the time Paul Cambon derided Raindre as "a paper boy", preferring to deal directly with Delcassé, but Hayne maintains that he was frightened by the responsibility of his new post.¹⁴⁵³ Less convincingly, Hayne adds that Raindre was influential behind the scenes in certain restricted areas of policy-but, it seems, in strengthening Delcassé's pre existing inclinations, in his case to support France's religious Protectorate in the Levant. Raindre's other notions, such as cordiality with Germany and an aversion to agreement with Italy on Tripolitania, were simply ignored by the minister when circumstances suited.

Delcassé showed more confidence in Maurice Bompard, the Commercial Director he inherited from Hanotaux, to the extent that he had some involvement in drafting Commercial Treaties, notably that with Italy.¹⁴⁵⁴ However, changes in personnel remained a feature throughout Delcassé's time at the Quai, for example the appointment of Maurice Paléologue to the post of Sous Directeur du Midi, a subsection within the Political division in which, up until 1904, his career had been languishing. This was someone whose relations with most of his colleagues were "strained, to say the least", about whom no one else in the Centrale seems to have had much of a positive word to say, but who was singled out for special treatment by the Minister.¹⁴⁵⁵ In return, Paléologue, like Raindre, largely agreed with Delcassé's policies, his little contribution

¹⁴⁵² Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 65-67.

¹⁴⁵³ Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 66 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 83 & 66-67.

¹⁴⁵⁴ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 70.

¹⁴⁵⁵ Lauren, *Diplomats* (1976), 51-52 & Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 116-121.

being to reinforce the minister's pre-existing attitudes, especially antipathy for Germany.¹⁴⁵⁶

In sum, as Hayne accepts, the Centrale officials who were most influential with Delcassé "generally confirmed his wider reading of international relations".¹⁴⁵⁷ Any actual influence which they did achieve, as in the case of Bompard, primarily derived from specialist, technical knowledge which they could bring to bear on the tasks at hand.

Delcassé and the Ambassadors.

Abroad, the Quai maintained Ambassadors and staff in the ten powers deemed most important to French interests. Lesser nations, such as Holland, Belgium, and Portugal, were served by diplomatic legations. Parallel with this was a Consular service, generally attracting candidates who were either of a lesser calibre or who, like Louis and Berthelot, would later transfer to the Diplomatic Service. This provided a coverage remarked by Hayne to be remarkably broad in geographical coverage.¹⁴⁵⁸

Even before the reach of Sciences-Po old boys in the Centrale had achieved its pre 1914 zenith, there were differences of opinion between officials in the Centrale and those serving abroad. The way in which the minister had to deal with his diplomats was different, not least by virtue of the potential autonomy that their physical location and direct contact with foreign statesmen afforded, but arguably Delcassé achieved results not dissimilar in nature to his dealings with the Centrale.

¹⁴⁵⁶ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 120.

¹⁴⁵⁷ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 70.

¹⁴⁵⁸ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 15.

Jules Cambon was one of the three powerful ambassadors who emerged in the Delcassé period if from 1897-1902 in “the mild exile” of the French embassy in Washington, which temporarily curtailed his influence.¹⁴⁵⁹ The others were his brother Paul Cambon in London and Camille Barrère, at Rome. It is beyond dispute that in negotiating agreements with Italy and Britain, Barrère and Paul Cambon in different ways exceeded or altered Delcassé’s instructions, and that the pictures they sent back to Paris of foreign statesmens’ intentions and enthusiasm for an agreement with France were distorted for the ambassadors’ own ends. The minister’s approach to the ambassadorial triumvirate was to accomodate them by recalling Barrère, Paul, and, later, Jules Cambon to Paris for consultations; they responded with confidence and respect, and, in the case of Jules, with refined correspondence appealing to the minister’s vanity.¹⁴⁶⁰

Whatever liberties may have been taken by the ambassadors in departing from their instructions on how and when to execute policy, though, the substance of that policy remained quite clearly authorised by Delcassé. He was capable of independent thought and where necessary of contesting the opinions of the triumvirate, despite the power and experience at their disposal. Notably, Delcassé was always far more enthused by the 1894 Russian alliance than Paul Cambon, who though for the moment reluctantly accepted the lack of any alternative.¹⁴⁶¹ There was also strong disagreement with Barrère, who in 1900 baulked to make the explicit linkage between French consent to Italian encroachment into Tripoli, and increased French influence in Morocco, that Delcassé desired.¹⁴⁶² In this case too, Delcassé had his way. Whilst the extent of any such discord should not be overstated, and the influence of Paul Cambon in particular

¹⁴⁵⁹ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 83.

¹⁴⁶⁰ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 88.

¹⁴⁶¹ Hayne, *French Foreign Office* (1993), 106-7.

¹⁴⁶² Andrew, *Delcassé* (1968), 139-140, according to which this difference stemmed from Barrère’s “desire to wrest Italy from German domination”, whereas Delcassé’s more limited aim was “to win Italian sympathies”, as much relative to Britain in the Mediterranean as Germany to the north.

on policy towards Britain remains open to debate, Delcassé seems to have been the most influential man in formulating French foreign policy.

Table 2: French, British and German Ambassadors from June 1898-June 1902.

City	<u>French Ambassador</u> ¹⁴⁶³	<u>British Ambassador</u> ¹⁴⁶⁴	<u>German Ambassador</u>
Paris	-	Sir Edmond Monson, 13 October 1896- 23 February 1905. ¹⁴⁶⁵	Count Zu Munster-Ledenburg, 1881-1899. Prince Hugo Radolin, 1900.
London	Baron Alphonse de Courcel, December 1894 - December 1898. Paul Cambon, 7 December 1898 - 1920.	-	Von Hatzfeldt-Wildenburg, 1885-1901. Graf Von Wolff-Metternich, 1901-1912. ¹⁴⁶⁶
Berlin	Marquis Emmanuel de Noailles, 1896-1902	Sir Frank Lascelles, 1895-1908. ¹⁴⁶⁷	-
Constantinople	Paul Cambon, 1891 to November 1898. Ernest Constans, to 1909.	Sir Philip Currie, December 1893-July 1898. Sir Nicholas O'Connor, 1898-1908.	Marschall Von Biberstein, 1897-1912.
Rome	Camille Barrère, 1897-1924.	Sir Philip Currie, July 1898-January 1903.	
St Petersburg	Marquis Gustave-Louis de Montebello, 1891-1902.	Sir Charles Stewart Scott, 1898-1904.	Prince Hugo Radolin, 1895-1900.

¹⁴⁶³ Information from Quai reference material, Zorgbibe, *Delcassé* (2001), 363-385 & others.

¹⁴⁶⁴ Information from Sir Sydney Lee (ed), *The Dictionary of National Biography*, supplement 1901-11 (Oxford University Press: 1920), 171-5, 455-6, 637-8, and H. W. C. Davis & J. R. H. Weaver (eds), *The Dictionary of National Biography*, supplement 1911-21, (Oxford University Press: 1927), 43-4 & 323-4.

¹⁴⁶⁵ Monson was preceded by the Marques of Dufferin, in Paris from March 1892, and followed by Sir Francis Bertie who remained in post until April 1918.

¹⁴⁶⁶ Felician Prill, *Ireland, Britain and Germany, 1871-1914* (London, Macmillan: 1975), 187.

¹⁴⁶⁷ Lascelles was preceded by Sir Edward Malet, and followed by Sir Edward Goschen who remained in post until 1914. Charmley, *Splendid Isolation?* (1999), 238 & 342.

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